

# **CORRESPONDENCE**

## **II**

Rene Guenon

***René Guénon to Marcel Clavelle alias Jean Reyor (1)***

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July 29, 1932

The Sunnis, the Shiites and the Khawarij differ mainly on the question of the modalities of the Caliphate; there is no heterodoxy in that, and moreover it is far from being as clear-cut as one imagines in Europe; there are so many nuances and degrees that it is almost impossible to draw clear boundaries.

What is heterodox are the firâq, that is to say the sects; it is true that most of them came out of Shiism, including the most recent ones (like Behaism, for example, which has practically nothing Islamic anymore); one must therefore believe that there is something there that favors their appearance, but, in any case, that is no longer Shiism as such.

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Cairo, September 2, 1932

... For example, he (A. Ink..) speaks in his book of a so-called "rite of Minang Kabao"; this must certainly impress people who do not know that this name is simply that of a region of Sumatra, which has not the slightest connection with the Khmers. Moreover, even if his origin is really what he claims, I would really like to know where he would have found the Khmer tradition, of which the present-day Cambodians have all the less to commend themselves because they are the descendants of the invaders by whom it has been destroyed

... You ask me, on the question of "attitude", if anything has changed since the publication of some of my works. I will answer you very clearly: yes, certain doors, on the western side, have closed definitively. Besides, I never had any illusions, but I had no right to seem to neglect certain possibilities; the situation had to become completely clear, and what I did contributed to it in its part. Perhaps there will still be one last (negative) result to obtain so that everyone knows what to expect unequivocally...

... As for political Islam, it is better not to talk about it, because it is only a historical memory; it is certainly in this political domain that Western ideas, with the conception of "nationalities", have wreaked the most havoc, and with singular rapidity. It's so much so that now the Egyptians don't want to help the Syrians, nor the latter the Palestinians, and so on; and there are many to whom we can no longer even manage to make them understand how much this particularism is contrary to traditional interests. - This did not prevent a so-called French "explorer", who is probably only a common tourist, from claiming in a recent book that the Khalifat still exists in fact, and, even better, that it has its seat right here in El-Azhar. It would be to burst out laughing if the reality, in this respect, were not basically sad enough; do you know that at the congress in Jerusalem, in

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1 — Dole August 1992, From typewritten extracts.

last December, the question of the restoration of the Caliphate having been raised, it was impossible to reach an agreement and any solution? And do you also know, with special regard to El-Azhar, that the rector, about a year ago, refused to sign a protest against the Italian atrocities in Tripolitania, under the pretext that "it was there a political question in which he did not have to intervene.

... As for the "Western prophecies" (I would prefer to call them only "predictions") which speak of a future "struggle of the Cross and the Crescent", I confess that I only grant them a most relative value. First, I do not see at all, in the present state of the world, which peoples could well be qualified to represent the Cross; then the Crescent has never symbolized Islam except in the imagination of Westerners, it does not belong to it exclusively or essentially, and there is only a symbol of "majesty", nothing more - I will point out to you in this regard that the King of France Henri II, whom I do not believe was a Muslim, had made it his personal emblem, and also that we see here on many Coptic and therefore Christian shops, the Cross between the horns of the crescent (which reproduces elsewhere exactly an ancient Phoenician symbol, long before Islam and Christianity). - But there are "clichés" that ignorance likes to repeat indefinitely: thus, to take yet another example, it is agreed in Europe that the standard of the Prophet was green; now there were two, a white for peace and a black for war; the green only came much later, under I don't know which Caliph.

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Cairo, September 7, 1933

... For the article on the Caliphate, I see what it is all about: it is a bad trick that France wants to play on England, which would also like, and for a long time already, to have a Caliph "frontage" which would only be an instrument in his hands; and I now explain to myself the journey of a certain Moroccan character who somewhat intrigued us a few months ago... In fact, one of the two solutions would hardly be better than the other, especially given what is currently happening in North Africa (not to mention Syria); never before had the French behaved in such a way; this is no doubt the effect of the fine promises made during the war. Either way, it's rather clumsy to entrust the "starting" of this idea to people as grossly ignorant as the author of the article in question. "Priestly power", "Pontifical sovereignty", etc.... as much nonsense as words... It is moreover completely false that the presence of a Caliph is necessary for the maintenance of orthodoxy, and it is no less so that the Caliph must fulfill such or such a definite condition, one would generally prefer that he be of Arab origin, but even that is not at all necessary, and in fact anyone can be appointed. During the congress in Jerusalem, some people thought of putting forward the candidacy of someone I know very well, and who does not meet any of the alleged conditions; he is only an energetic man and very learned in the things of Islam, and that is the main thing; but without knowing the current sultan of Morocco, I believe that there is a good chance that he does not possess either of these

two qualities. On the other hand, there are three possible modes of designating a Caliph, each equally regular, and which correspond properly to the three respective titles of "Khalifat", "Imam" and "Anûrul-Muminîn"; you see that it is quite complex and that no one in Europe knows anything about it. - As for Mustafa Kémal, I understand why he would enter the combination, and you can be sure that his reasons have nothing "spiritual", but how could he and his supporters continue to pretend to be, I don't do not say "Sunnis", but simply "Orthodox" when they use, in the mosque, a translation of the Qoran, which is absolutely forbidden. Moreover, people who have made the wearing of a cap the symbol of "civilization" are judged by that very fact, I do not mean that there is a question of principle here (it is much less important than they don't believe it themselves), but I take it as a "sign" which gives quite exactly the measure of their "intellectual horizon".

..... You understood well what I wanted to say for the names of the Hebrews and the Arabs; I know many other meanings than the one you indicate, but apart from the fact that it is susceptible to very diverse interpretations (one could even relate it to the "river Ocean"), it is in any case only secondary in relation to that which designates the West, and which is found among the most diverse peoples. - As for the question of the relationship between the two Hebrew and Egyptian traditions, I also know that there are also the different texts that you cite; but first, Moses may have known the Egyptian tradition perfectly and yet have introduced nothing of its form into the Hebrew tradition, these are two quite different things. Moreover, the relations between the Hebrews and the Egyptians, in his time, seem to have been very hostile, therefore little favorable to any "assimilation"; and, even earlier, the Hebrews seem to have made a point of keeping their own "Abrahamic" tradition, that is to say Chaldean, unaltered; do we not see even now how this people, when it lives among others, always maintains itself similar to itself? In any case, it suffices to look at the Egyptian symbols on the one hand and the Chaldean ones on the other to realize on which side the relationship is; there is not the slightest doubt to be had on this, and this without even bringing in the question of affinities of race and language which also count for something in the determination of traditional forms. - Now it would remain to know what the "vessels of gold and silver" mean, it is not absolutely clear, but it may well be that it simply relates to some secondary traditional sciences. To tell the truth, we do not see very old traces of Hermeticism properly speaking among the Hebrews, but that does not mean that it did not exist there as well as among the Arabs, and that is what which would have been really of Egyptian origin. This would agree with the 2nd part of the phrase of the "Ash Mezareph"; but the first part of it is more subject to caution, because, in any case, one cannot assimilate hermeticism to Kabbalah, nor say that the latter essentially concerns the "mysteries of nature"; one could only say that it contains the principle of it, and that, this principle being the same everywhere, one can attach hermetism itself to it as an application, even if, such as it is constituted in fact, it proceeds of a different traditional form; it would then only be the affirmation of a certain equivalence of all the traditions, having been able

allow, in a case like this, the assimilation of a science of foreign origin.

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Cairo, September 28, 1933

... Your remark about the history of Nicolas Flamel is important, indeed, the question would be to know if one can find, in the same direction, indications relating to older times ..... - With regard to Atlantis, it would be necessary to wonder if the Chaldeans did not come from it just as much as the Egyptians, which seems very likely to me.

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Cairo, October 20, 1933

... For the relationship of Kabbalah and Hermeticism, the sentence of Artephius is very vague indeed; the quotations from Philalethes are perhaps only apparently clearer, for I am not at all persuaded that the name of Israel should be understood there in the literal sense; it is like the 144,000 elect of the Apocalypse, "taken from among all the tribes of Israel", this word has often been used to designate all the initiates, whatever their origin. - On the other hand, I have often noticed a rather bizarre confusion between Mary, sister of Moses, and Mary the Egyptian, who is from the Christian era; and, as to the assimilation between Hermes and Jethro, that seems a fine fantasy; besides, Jethro apparently has nothing to do with Egypt. All this is very confused; however, your remark about the probable darkening of Egyptian tradition at the time of Moses is correct, and indeed it does seem that the predominance of the magical side actually goes back quite a long way. - As for the Chaldean tradition, you have understood what I meant: to the Chaldeans, we must also add the Hittites, whose name is found in forms which show that the origin is the same.

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Cairo, November 11, 1933

.... For the question of money, I don't know to what extent what you quote to me may be considered accurate; the thing is possible because of the Papacy-Empire duality in the Middle Ages; but in older times, there was certainly a direct control of spiritual authority: thus among the Celts, this control was exercised by the Druids. On the other hand, the claim of the king to be "Emperor in his kingdom" is not only unjustified, but contrary to the very nature of imperial power, one of the characteristics of which is, as Dante explains in "De Monarchia", that its jurisdiction has no territorial limits such as those of a particular kingdom.

.... If it is certain that there are still Kabbalists, it is no less so that they absolutely refuse to communicate anything whatsoever to non-Jews; it seems that they

are generally very difficult to admit even Jewish pupils, and that some do not want to have any more pupils at all. In short, it's always the same thing: everything closes more and more, and there are even things that we even seem to want to let go, at least outwardly: it's like certain Coptic monasteries where we no longer receives anyone, so that there are only a few very old monks, who die one after the other without being replaced...

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Cairo, February 8, 1934

... I remain quite convinced that there is not only one character who used the name of Saint Germain, which, in fact, does not mean anything other than "Holy Brotherhood"... As for the story to which you allude must go back to 1912 or 1913, there were then singular things in connection with the war in the Balkans, and more particularly with the constitution of Albania as an independent state.

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Cairo, March 1, 1934

... Your interpretation of the title "count" is quite correct (companion)... and your association with the "Holy Roman Empire" is surely not without foundation. The same goes for Albania: the population of this country is indeed largely Muslim (Mohammed Ali, from whom the royal family of Egypt descends, was Albanian).

Rene Guenon

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The same ? ? ?, date unknown

... It is certain that the founders of the G   Ly of England deviated from this spirit, but they cannot however be considered as usurpers purely and simply, since previously they were themselves regular members of the old Mac   working. However diminished it may have been at that time, it was not extinct, and it never was, since it still exists today... there are also the Scottish degrees which were instituted above all to react against the intrusion of the Protestant spirit.

April 12, 1932... Operative Masonry has always continued to exist in England as a separate organization, somewhat comparable to the Fellowship; it corresponds, moreover, to what are in France, the Companions stonecutters, today almost completely disappeared, despite the too famous M   de l'O... claims, who, despite all the titles with which it adorns itself, has never been able to attach itself to it regularly.

April 26, 1934... I don't remember where I found the date of 1702 for the death of Chr.

Wren; I have in fact also seen that of 1723; it therefore seems that we must admit that 1702 is only the date from which, for one reason or another, he would have ceased all activity.

May 10, 1934... It is correct that the G  O  abolished the title of Grand Master (at about the same time as the formula of the G A  if I am not mistaken) as too little "democratic"; the function is fulfilled by the president of the Council of the Order, but the absence of the title makes it impossible for him to deal with the majority of the Masonic Obediences of other countries; the Grande Ma trise has never been occupied by any king of France; there is only one country, Sweden, where the king is Grand Master. In England, if the king is a Mason, which is not currently the case, he bears the title of "Protector of Masonry"; Edward VII, who was Grand Master when he was Prince of Wales, gave up this function on his accession, and was replaced by the Duke of Connaught who still holds it today. It is true that the King of England has, by right or title, that of Grand Master of the Royal Order of Scotland; but if he is not a mason, he cannot effectively exercise this function and is replaced by a Pro Grand Master, so that the title is then only purely honorary.

June 1, 1933... The Royal Order of Scotland is a title of high ranks, which is even considered the oldest of all, since it traces its origin to Robert Bruce (1306-1329); it is he who is also designated by the name of *Rosy-Cross of Heredom of Kilwinning*...

October 20, 1933... What you say about the constitution of LL  not being attached to any obedience is correct, but it would not meet the definition of English "clandestine LL ", who are said to be "working from time immemorial" .

March 19, 1933... For your question concerning the D  H , the solution officially adopted is this: a Mason received in a mixed L  and who then requests his admission into a regular Obedience, is not initiated of new, but only "regularized", which is a purely administrative formality, this therefore implies that one recognizes one's initiation as valid, as would also be that which would be conferred by a so-called "clandestine" L , c' is to say constituted outside of any obedience.

September 28, 1933... What is true is that not only 7 Masons (but it must be added: having the grade of M ) can constitute an L , but that there is not even any way of constitute otherwise; it is only then that this L  can request its attachment to an Obedience. As for the so-called "clandestine" LL  in England (there are none elsewhere), these are LL  prior to the founding of the G  L  and who did not want to join it, but continued to simply ignore it; there must be 4 more in operation.

to MC (Marcel Clavelle)

June 27, 1935

... These efforts to fix the Bohemians and the Jews are certainly not without significance, indeed; it seems to me that all of this is related to the "stopping" of the "wheel" or the change from O to at the end of the cycle; this is, moreover, one of the questions I intend to discuss in my next book.

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to MC, August 25, 1935

... For the "Protocols", if they were published in Germany before being in France, they must not have caused much noise there at the beginning; it was only the Hitler movement that gave them importance. As for the American edition of the so-called "protocols", it seems that it was Ford who paid for it; but since that time it has completely changed, for no known reason, and has become quite favorable to the Jews; he even subsidizes a singular personage who lives in Jerusalem and calls himself "David king of Israel," but quite inoffensive; he is an old goldsmith whom most people regard as a little mad; he established a kind of protocol at home, requiring everyone, including his wife, to call him "majesty", and he even made medals in his effigy...

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to MC, October 13, 1935

... V. Lov, then suggested that I do some work on Byzantine iconography; you will see there some of the things he told me about Mount Athos. For the rest of these, it is a question of a formula called "prayer of the intelligence" or "prayer of the heart", which must be pronounced in a special way, regulated on the breath; it seems that this practice requires training which can only be done under the direction of a master; I had already heard that something like this existed in some Russian monasteries. But what is perhaps most interesting is the story of the 7 mysterious ascetics who form a kind of very hidden spiritual center; it seems that this is not a thing of the past, because one of the monks he saw told him that he had met one of them; it is said that, when one dies, one of the anchorites (not one of the ordinary monks who live in the convents) is called to replace him; it seems, moreover, that most of the monks have no conscious communication with them, so that, if really it is a question of an initiatory organization, it must in any case be very closed and limited to a very small number. . There are many rather enigmatic things in all this; naturally, the fairly short stay he made there was not enough to realize more exactly what is going on.

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to MC, October 17, 1935

... "Lö of Jö" means "Lodge of Jakin", this expression designated in the operative Maç ÿ, a Lodge composed exclusively of ecclesiastics, for whom there was a special initiation, and among which were taken the chaplains of the ordinary Lodges .

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to MC, October 24, 1935

... It's not the Cadriyah[? ] who are powerful in Sudan, but the Idrissiyah; there are no Wahabites[? ] in Egypt, where moreover it would be rather frowned upon (in certain places, the peasants have no worse insult to say to someone than to call him a "Wahabi", without, moreover, knowing too well what it is) and moreover the Wahabites are the declared adversaries of any esoteric organization without exception; the Sanursiyah[? ] no longer have a center in Tripolitania and for good reason, since the Italians destroyed and massacred everything...

... There are no more Muslims 'today' in the House of Lords, since it was Lord Headdley and he died a few months ago; on the other hand, [ . ] *EL Ulema* does not mean "Sage of Sages", but simply "Chief of the Ulema", that is to say doctors of the Shariyah; there is a big difference between *ûlem* "learned" (ulema in the plural) and *Hakîm*, "wise"; in short, it is a title equivalent to that of sheikh *El-Islam* in other countries (moreover, we say "allâma", which is a superlative of *âlam*) and the authority of the one who gate does not extend beyond the borders of Yugoslavia.

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to MC, October 26, 1935

... I had confirmation of what you told me some time ago about Christopher Wren: I don't know if his retirement in 1702 [? illegible] was due only to his age or if it had other motives, but, in any case, the real date of his death is 1723 and he was then 90 years old; what is quite curious is that this date coincides with that of the publication of the new constitutions, as if we had waited for that for the disappearance of a witness of the past who could be embarrassing...

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to MC, July 3, 1936

The word "barzakh" (in the plural "barazikh") properly signifies an "interval" which both separates and unites different states; analogically, it is applied to certain characters in an acceptance that can be compared to the etymological meaning of "pontifex" and it is moreover that Mohyiddin, in particular, is called "barzakh el-barazikh".

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to MC, October 15, 1936

It is above all of hermeticism that I thought, in fact, at the end of my article (*Le Sanglier et l'Ourse*); your remark on the heterogeneous character of the things which have been incorporated into the Christian tradition is quite correct: I wonder if there would not be a certain relationship between this fact and the fact that it is the only traditional form which has no sacred language of its own; there is also an anomaly there which is truly strange, and I must admit that, although I have often thought about it, I have never been able to find a satisfactory explanation for it...

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to MC, October 22, 1936

It is really difficult, indeed, to know for sure that there is nothing left at all on the western side, since if there is anything, it is so closed and so well hidden, and that moreover, to tell the truth, it has even always been (and not only now) more so than anywhere else. As for the "withdrawal" of which you speak and its consequences, I remember that Ch-L. told me one day that, contemplating precisely such eventualities while speaking with a priest (I suppose now that it must be the one by whom he knew the "Is. Int."), he told him that he asked how this could be reconciled with the promise that the Church should last "until the end of the century" to which this priest replied: "the Christian Church is not necessarily the same thing as the Roman Church" I cannot guarantee the exact terms of the answer, but, in any case, the meaning was indeed that, so he admitted that, even in such a case, all possibility would not yet be definitively closed, which would amount, in short, to assuming that there must be something in Christianity which is capable of keeping the spiritual influence apart from Rome; but does this refer to the Eastern Orthodox Churches or to something else in Latin Catholicism itself? Here is what I would be very embarrassed to say, in the absence of any other precision...

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to MC, November 5, 1936

What you are telling me about the three denials of St-Pierre seems to me quite correct; as to what can be preserved independently of Rome, it must be admitted that all this must, in any case, be more and more hidden (which, by the way, is natural at the present time) because you are surely right for the 'Abyssinia, and we must add to this the imminent disappearance of Mt-Athos, not to mention the voluntary extinction of esoteric knowledge among the Coptic monks.

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to MC, February 24, 1937

The recognition of the "Emperor of Ethiopia" by the Pope once again gives me the impression that he is much more truly a "prisoner" now than he ever was before the Lateran Pacts. .. About the Pope, I made a very curious observation: it is that here most people do not have the slightest idea of what he can be; some have never heard of him, others confuse him with the Patriarch of Constantinople and still others believe that he was a character who existed during the time of the Byzantine emperors. however, there emerges at least (from Coom's article) one interesting thing: it is that, on the way of

... envisaging the role of El-Khidr, the Hindus agree entirely with the Muslims.

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to MC, March 14, 1937

... For El-Khidr, I would prefer, in any case, if this subject must be treated, that it be by someone other than me. There is a sort of spiritual "relatedness" with Enoch, Elijah, St. George, etc., but it is not a question of assimilations, of identifications as the Orientalists seem to believe. coom. gives the reproduction of a miniature where we see El-Khidr and Elijah seated near each other; if they were one and the same character, I would like to know how this could be interpreted... El-Khidr is properly the *Master of the Afrâd*, who are independent of the *Qutb* and may not even be known from him ; it is indeed, as you say, something more "direct", and which is in a way outside the defined and delimited functions, however high they may be; and that is why the number of *Afrad* is indeterminate. This comparison is sometimes used: a prince, even if he exercises no function, is nevertheless, by himself, superior to a minister (unless the latter is also a prince himself, which can happen, but is not necessary); in the spiritual order, the *Afrâd* are analogous to princes, and the *Aqtâb* to ministers; this is only a comparison, of course, but which nevertheless helps a little to understand the relationship between one and the other.

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to MC, March 25, 1937

It seems that the atmosphere of Antwerp is something dreadful, which even gives inexplicable physical discomfort; but, there and even for Lyon, as perhaps also the Balearic Islands and some other places in Europe, and for California as far as America is concerned (because it is probably not for nothing that so many bizarre things congregate there), I think that it is only a matter of secondary centers, which should not be counted in the number of "towers" properly so called.

These seem rather laid out in a kind of arc of a circle surrounding Europe at a certain distance: one in the region of Niger, from where it was already said, in the time of ancient Egypt, that the most formidable wizards; one to

Sudan, in a mountainous region inhabited by a "lycanthrope" population of around 20,000 individuals (I know eyewitnesses here); two in Asia Minor, one in Syria and the other in Mesopotamia; then one on the side of Turkestan where there are things as "mixed up" as in Syria, in good and in bad; there should therefore be two more to the north, towards the Urals or the western part of Siberia, but I must say that, so far, I cannot locate them exactly.

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to MC, April 1, 1937

Your remark on the role of Elijah for the Kabbalists seems correct to me, and I hardly see any other interpretations.

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to MC, April 14, 1937

I saw somewhere the story of the Antichrist chained to an island, which moreover seems very difficult to identify geographically, but I think that this story must be placed in the category of those which have their origin in a more or less misunderstood symbolism, like many stories of monsters, fantastic animals, etc...

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to MC, April 17, 1937

I spoke to you the other day about the island of the Antichrist; I find that this island is called Bratâil (this name apparently comes from *bartal* which means "corrupt"); and also some say that it was Solomon who had him chained there; it seems to be a volcanic island, but I don't know how to identify it with one of the Sunda islands.

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to MC, June 2, 1937

... It would be necessary in particular to distinguish between the "signs" and the effective possession of what they express... The supreme *Qutb* must indeed be related to the whole of humanity, and the subordinate *Aqteb*, to the different traditional forms; but it is no less true that the supreme *Qutb* itself must also have a symbolic "seat" in relation to each regular traditional form...

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to MC, July 9, 1937

... As for your remark about communion under both species (which moreover still exists in the Orthodox Church, and even in certain Eastern rites attached to Rome), it is quite true that there is in all this something that

is difficult to explain, unless one admits a complete transformation of Christianity (at a time difficult to determine but which, according to certain indications, could be that of Constantine).

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to MC, July 9, 1937

...here the last of the ignorant knows that he (the Mahdi) must be of Arab race and a descendant of the Prophet; and then the Mahdi must not be a "new Prophet" at all and to consider him as such is a huge heresy.

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Excerpt from a letter to Jean Reyor (*Les Cahiers de l'Herne*)  
(Undated letter; but the announcement of Meslin's death in the last paragraph (not reproduced) allows it to be placed between September 1938 and early 1939.)

Artus Gouffier, count of Kerhavas, was the brother of the admiral, and another brother was abbot of Saint-Denis; he himself fulfilled the function of Grand Ecuyer under Henry II, and he was considered to be the richest lord of his time (it is of him that popular legend made the Marquis of Carabas, by deformation of the name of Kerhavas). I once went with Charbonneau to the Chateau d'Oiron, which was his residence, and which is not very far from Loudun; one of the walls of the court is covered with a series of signs which are said to be the marks of the horses in the stables of Henry II; now, among these signs, many have a clearly hermetic character, and there are notably a fairly large number of them where the seal of Solomon is found in combination with various other elements. In this regard, it should be noted that, at the same time, the seal of Solomon was particularly used as a mark for certain organizations of artisanal initiation (this is moreover what made me think of speaking to you about this at about Dürer), hence its presence, especially in Germany, on the signs of the breweries where they met; this is even why we still see it today in certain brands of beer, although naturally those who use it in this way no longer know the reason for it. On the other hand, the fact that these are brands of horses, whether real or supposed, is also interesting, since everything relating to horses has often been used, and in the the most diverse traditions, from "covering" to things of an initiatory order. Charbonneau supposed that these signs had perhaps been composed by someone from the Carmelites of Loudun who, around the same time, traced on the walls of their monastery symbols whose hermetic and initiatory character is not in doubt either; Without naturally being able to affirm anything, he told me that he was even thinking more especially, in this respect, of Brother Guyot, whose curious "Rosicrucian" signature he has perhaps shown you (he has moreover reproduced it in one of his Regnabit articles). - Another enigmatic singularity is what the peasants call the "Cocadrille": it is a dried crocodile which is inside the church of Oiron, applied to the wall, exactly like those which one still sees here above the doors of some old houses; it is said that this monster once ravaged the country and devoured

people, and that we end up taking it in the moat of the castle! Charbonneau thought it must have been brought from the East by an older member of the Gouffier family, Knight of Malta, whose tomb is one of those that exist in the church, but obviously it is difficult to know whether he really could have brought him alive... Instead of "Cocadrille", some also say "Cacodrille", a variant which has a completely bizarre meaning: " *Kakos*" means bad in Greek, and "drille" is one of the denominations of Companions, so that Cacodrille = bad companion, which immediately makes one think of the murderers of Hiram (and of Master Jacques); there is no doubt only an "accidental" comparison here, at least according to outward appearances, but, when one thinks of the links which exist between the legend of Hiram and the myth of Osiris and of the fact that the crocodile was in ancient Egypt a Typhonian symbol, all the same it must be agreed that it is really well combined! This, in connection with Poitou and its legends, the Companions and other "travellers", etc., reminds me of yet another thing, which would bring us this time to Rabelais; L. Daudet alluded to it in one of his books, and I find the reference in my notes: *Les Horreurs de la guerre*, p. 173; perhaps you will be able to see this on occasion, especially since I remember that all that he says of Rabelais in this part of his book is rather curious; but maybe you already know it. You will be very kind to tell me what you think of all this; it seems to me that there is here in any case a set of comparisons which may not be without interest from various points of view. [...]

Rene Guenon

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***René Guénon to Marcel Maugy alias Denis Roman***

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No date.

I come to your question concerning the Maçy here: there was first an Egyptian Gÿ Oÿ, who once had a curious dispute with the Gÿ Oÿ of France for the possession of the Rite of Memphis ( I can come back to this story another time if you are interested); when the Scottish Supÿ Consÿ of Egypt was founded, this Gÿ Oÿ transformed into Gÿ Lÿ by renouncing all jurisdiction over the high ranks. Subsequently, there was a split due as always to personal rivalries, and above all to a certain hostility that existed between King Fouad and Prince Mohammed Ali (the brother of the former Khediv); since the death of the first, the thing had no longer any reason to exist, and, on the order of King Farouk, the two GGÿ LLÿ merged into one, of which the Gÿ Mÿ is one of his maternal uncles, Hussein Pasha Sabri. - On the other hand, several LLÿ from Lebanon who belonged to the Gÿ Lÿ of Egypt have just separated from it in an attempt to reconstitute a Lebanese Gÿ Oÿ which already existed a dozen years ago, but which then had only an ephemeral duration; it seems very doubtful that it could succeed better this time...

You may have already learned of the foundation, under the auspices of the Gÿ Lÿ of France, of the Lÿ "La Grande Triade" (You can easily see where this title comes from), of which Venÿ is the Fÿ Ivan Cerf, Gÿ Orÿ; its constitution dates back to last April, but I didn't want to tell you about it before it started to function normally, which is now the case. It is proposed to apply to it as far as possible the views that I have exposed in the "Overviews" and to try, although it is certainly not easy, to find the methods of "realization" of the old Maçy operative; you see that we gave up the idea of an independent Lÿ, which, while presenting certain advantages, really gave rise to too many difficulties. On the day of the installation, the Gÿ Mÿ Dumesnil de Grammont, who is himself one of the founding members, declared that, "God helping, this day will perhaps be more important for the Maçy than that of the proclamation of Anderson's Constitution"; as you can imagine, no one wishes it could be so more than me! If you were in Paris, I would urge you to apply for affiliation, but because of your remoteness, I don't really know what can be done, and, moreover, you are not the only one in that case; I've already raised the issue, and I'll be sure to let you know.

Of course, there are a lot of things that can only be worked out bit by bit, but it's already a good start, and I must say that I didn't expect this result to be achieved so soon.

Please believe, Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ, in my very fratÿ sentiments.

RG

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**Cairo, March 25, 1948.**

TyCyFy,

I had learned a few days ago from Fy Maridort that my reply to your letter had never reached you; as it dates back to the end of December, it seems that there is no longer any chance that you will receive it, and besides, I noticed that there were also other letters which had similarly lost around this time. It's all the more boring because I can't remember exactly everything I said to you; I intended, however, to try to find at least the essence of it, when your letter of March 16 reached me the day before yesterday.

I also learned from Fy Maridort that you were going to receive the rank of Companion without further delay, and I even believe that it must be for today. I was very happy with this news, and it only remains to wish that the delays could be shortened in the same way, which would make an advance of about a year; I think more and more that, for multiple reasons, it would be very beneficial for all three of you to achieve this as soon as possible...

Brother Maridort also communicated to me the information that you sent him concerning JB and the Ly Cheops; there are some rather singular things in all of this, and especially this story of the Ritual of the "Three Lights" which seems to me to contain some rather fanciful innovations, which does not surprise me if it is really by J. Chaboseau as we said; there are things in all this which it would be good to clear up if possible.

Another thing so as not to forget: Fy Mordvinoff, the last time he wrote to me, gave me the list of Officers, but, as he sometimes happens to distort proper names, I don't couldn't figure out which is that of 2° Survy; would you tell me? -- I also made a remark about this list: have we not restored to the GT, as we had done in the past in Thebah, the functions of the Deacons, to which we attach great importance in the English Maçy? I would also like, for a similar reason, to ask you where 2nd Survy is located; this is a point that can lead to modifications, particularly in the opening ritual; if you do not know the one which was in use at Thebah, and which was an adaptation of an old English operative ritual, I will have to try to find it to send you a copy.

I'm a little surprised at what you tell me about how the members of the Rituals Commission have lost interest in its work; but, if the Fy Marty is not discouraged by it, and if the others are content to simply approve of what he has done, it may indeed be better, as you say; this can avoid many useless discussions, as well as the unsatisfactory compromises to which they might lead. -- It would be good if things didn't drag out too much and if we could achieve a result as soon as possible; I already have requests, from Italy and Lebanon, about the possibility of obtaining rituals with a truly traditional spirit... But it goes without saying that, on the other hand, we should not rush to the point that it neglects to examine sufficiently many

important questions.

The question of the "Lÿ. of table", of which you speak to me this time, is a little embarrassing indeed; it is certain in any case that the people of 1717 attributed excessive importance to it; but I believe however (and I see that it is also what you think) that there are at least some elements there which are of really ancient origin and must have come from the operative Macÿ. As such, it seems to me that it might be good to maintain it (or re-establish it), on the condition of not allowing it to become too invasive; after the initiation outfits, and also (I would even say above all) at the solstitial feasts, that would surely be much better than a profane banquet!

I return now to what you said to me in your previous letter, and to which I had already replied in the one which has been lost. -- First of all, I fully approve of the idea of restoring as completely as possible certain ritual uses which have more or less fallen into disuse, for example not only that of the maçÿ calendar of which you were speaking, but also that of the alphabet that many seem to no longer know (I sometimes had the opportunity to notice it in my correspondence, even with high-ranking FFÿ); the same also applies to the traditional acclamation. -- As for the tiling (and I was surprised at what you told me on this subject, because in my time, a la Gÿ Lÿ, it was still done very seriously), every Fÿ would have to be there accustomed in such a way that he never hesitates to answer; it is more important than one might think to maintain the desired state of mind. In the same vein, it would also be appropriate to restore the three questions that Venÿ must ask visitors when they enter Lÿ, and that most have long been unaware of; I still remember the embarrassment they caused one day to the Venÿ of a Parisian Lÿ, visiting a provincial Lÿ who had kept them! Besides these questions, there is even another one which is in common use in Anglo-Saxon Maçÿ, but which is completely unknown in France, or it would be impossible to answer it for a reason that you will soon see...

I would incidentally point out the difference between the French formula "A la Gloire du Gÿ Aÿ de l'Uÿ" and the English formula "In the NAME of the Gÿ Aÿ of the Uÿ"; there is something which seems to me to be more than a simple nuance and which would undoubtedly deserve to be studied more closely; it is especially in relation to the initiatic consecration that the thing is perhaps not without importance.

Now, a particularly important point would be, if it were possible, the restoration of the table or drawing of the Lÿ, such as it existed in the eighteenth century; but there is still another which is even more essential, since it is generally regarded as constituting a "landmark": it is the presence of the altar carrying the VSL ("Volume of the Sacred Law", represented practically in the West by the Bible, which moreover symbolizes all of the sacred Scriptures, and which should regularly, as I recalled somewhere in the "Overviews", be opened to the first chapter of the Gospel of Saint John ), on which are placed the compass and the square, in a different position for each of the 3 degrees. This is, moreover, what makes it possible to immediately answer the question to

which I alluded to above: "And now, my Brother, can you tell us what degree we are working?"

As for the initiation rituals, there is no doubt that it is that of the 2nd degree which will have to give the most trouble, because it is the one which has been by far the most damaged and deformed of all. ways under the pretext of "modernization". Your idea of making certain borrowings from the Mark Masonry seems to me correct in principle, because it is very probable that, originally, the particular "mark" was given to the Compagnon, which, in France, was sometimes referred to as formerly under the name of "Expert"; moreover, you may know that even the Royal Arch is regarded as having a more special and more direct connection with the rank of Companion, although the reasons for this are not clearly stated... from "mark", from "tessera"; I suppose it is the "Mark Master's token", which is a reproduction of what are called "Temple coins", reproduction moreover modified in that the inscriptions therein are in square Hebrew, while, on genuine coins, they are in character of an older form. -- But, if what you envisaged is perfectly admissible in principle, it would perhaps be quite difficult to achieve; and, on the other hand, there is something which seems even more important to me and which is, one might say, in the very essence of the grade of Companion: it is in this grade above all that the elements of Pythagorean origin, which the "speculatives" have always forgotten too much, although some very clear traces remain, in particular the Blazing Star and the predominance attributed to geometry (since even the Gŷ Aŷ of the Uŷ here becomes the Gŷ Gŷ of the Uŷ). In my opinion, it is on this side above all that research should be directed with a view to a correct restoration of the rank, and this would certainly be an excellent opportunity to bring to light again the elements in question, which, as I have sometimes indicated incidentally, really come from a regular and uninterrupted transmission, and which consequently are very far from being something which one has the right to treat as more or less negligible.

I believe that must be more or less what I told you, at least as far as I can remember when rereading your letter. If you would like, as I hope, to keep me informed of what will be done, it is understood that I will be able to add further details later; perhaps you will also find yourself pointing out to me some more particularly difficult or doubtful points...

I have just suddenly remembered that the too famous Marquès Rivière had reproduced the whole ritual of Thébah (opening, initiation to the 1st degree and closing) in an appendix to his book "La Trahison Spirituelle de la Fŷ Mŷ; you it might be possible to find it there if you don't have it somewhere else; in any case, it would certainly be useful for you to read it.

I hope that you will remember, next time, to share with me, as you had promised me, certain reflections that you have made on various questions of another order. In particular, about certain modes of "projection" of evil influences, I would be very interested to know what exactly these are; on the "flying hunt", I also made, on my side, some remarks which I will be able to communicate to you as well. We must hope that this time it will not happen

new impediments to our correspondence...

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, May 3, 1948.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

I am happy that my letter reached you well this time; yours of April 18 reached me a few days ago, and if I did not answer it immediately, it was because I had first to finish my articles for the June issue of "AND", for which I was rather late as always...

It is really good news that you have definitely obtained the exemption from the deadlines and that you can receive the 3rd degree before the holidays; This will indeed make a serious advance!

No one had yet told me about the seal of the Gÿ Tÿ; couldn't you send me a print of it so that I can better understand what it is? -- So far, I didn't know anything about your 2nd Survÿ either; what you tell me about it is on the whole rather satisfactory, in a relative sense at least; it is inevitable that the aptitudes of some are more or less limited, and one must not be too demanding...

I am surprised that none of you have Marquès-Rivière's book, because I thought that Clavelle at least must have it; maybe you can find it anyway. It would also be possible to have knowledge otherwise of the ritual in question if it is still in use in Thebah, which I do not know at all. Only very few of the former members should remain there; moreover, immediately after the war of 1914, there had been a great change, and which was certainly not in a favorable direction; that's also why many had stopped going there... Anyway, I think it would be useful for you to visit this Lÿ to see what's going on now. -- In this ritual you can find a definition of the function of Deacons; what is quite remarkable is that this function, which is surely of operative origin, corresponds almost exactly to that of the nuqabà in the Islamic Turuq. -- On the other hand, the 2nd Surv.. sits naturally in the middle of the col.. du Midi, as it should normally be; the French usage is only due to the need to establish a sort of false symmetry between the positions of the 2 Survÿ -- I would like to point out yet another detail of the same ritual which conforms to what exists in the Maç ÿ English: the presence, on the Survÿ trays, of a wooden column; during work, that of 1° Survÿ is upright and that of 2° Survÿ lying down, while the reverse is true when work is suspended.

For the question of the Bible, there are some really curious things in this discussion which you attended at the "Reveille Maçÿ; what was said there about the Gÿ Oÿ would seem to indicate that, even on this side, there has been a serious change in recent years; however, I do not know how far this will

go, because there are unfortunately indications of a very untraditional spirit, among others a proposal to admit as visitors the members of the Dÿ Hÿ, including the SSÿ! "I must say that in my time the use of the Bible had not been reestablished even at Thebah, and perhaps the central power would not have tolerated it; at that time, at the Gÿ Lÿ, the use of the formula Aÿ Lÿ. Gÿ Dÿ Gÿ Aÿ De Lÿ Uÿ was only optional. --For the modification of the said formula, what you are proposing seems very good to me and would in fact be of a nature to arrange everything.

What you say about this "nostalgia for universality" is surely true, and what is rather singular is that it seems to manifest itself above all in countries where Macÿ is the most divided (such as for example in Italy). -- We are also in agreement about the questions to be asked to visitors; it only remains to know exactly how they can be introduced into the initiation ritual.

Are the proposals for the rituals of the three degrees that will have to be submitted to the next Coven, which would really leave very little time, or only for that of the first degree, which surely is not the most difficult to arrange, but which implies, however, that general questions must be resolved?

The maçÿ alphabet. was used in correspondence (I don't believe that there were ever any inscriptions in the drawing of the Lÿ) for words which one did not want to write in "clear" for fear of indiscretion, and also for certain abbreviative formulas, such as the final formula of the letters, (i.e.: I greet you, Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ, by the mysterious numbers which are known to you and with all the honors which are due to you) . -- There remains a vestige of the alphabet in the sign...., moreover deformed because one believed to see there the image of a "long square" whereas in reality it was simply to be ..., i.e. L...

For the origin of the acclamation Eccÿ, what Vuillaume means, although it is inexactly expressed, relates to the name of El-Uzzâ, female divinity of the ancient Arabs, who would have had the acacia as a symbol (but I don't know what this assertion is based on, which seems rather dubious to me). It is much more likely that it is the word 'ezzah, which moreover is attached to the same root (which is also found with a prefix, in the name of the Colÿ Bÿ), and which has the sense of glory, strength, power. -- I must say that there is another interpretation, which is particular to the 18th degree, and which sees there a deformation of the Hebrew word *Hoshi'a*, Saviour; but this is doubtless only an added afterthought, as is often the case with many things which are found in the rituals of the higher ranks. -- I would add that, in English, "huzza" is an acclamation used even in the secular world; but, as the etymology of it is quite unknown, that does not resolve the question, and the most probable thing is that it is only an "exteriorization" of something which originally belonged to initiatic organizations; it is in any case much more plausible than assuming the opposite.

The paintings of the different degrees hanging on the walls mean absolutely nothing, since they are oriented according to the four cardinal points; their place can only be on the ground, in the central part of the Lÿ (of course, at the 3° degree, it is the

coffin of Hiram which occupies this place). Originally, the drawing was to be done with chalk (or charcoal) before the opening of the works (I believe, without being quite sure, that it was the Gŷ Expŷ who was in charge of it) , and erased after closing by the last Appŷ received; I have never seen anywhere that there was a definite order to be observed for this line, although it is not impossible; in any case, it was only to simplify things that the use of unrolling canvases was later adopted, which takes away a lot of its meaning from the thing.

For the altar, the triangular shape is certainly more normal than the cylindrical shape; but on the other hand the altar of Apollo, as far as I know, was cubic, it can also be a question of a modification having taken place at a more or less distant time. -- Your remarks on various place names are curious, but I do not know exactly what conclusions can be drawn from them.

I do not believe that one can see a relationship between the three steps of Vishnu and those of the walk of the APPŷ; these are described as "the first steps in the corner of a long square"? But there is something else which, on the other hand, is directly related to the three steps of Vishnu, or rather with the corresponding "stations": these are the places occupied by the first three Officers (on the condition, of course, that that of the 2° survŷ is normal). -- another remarkable thing is that there is a ritual walk in Chinese initiatory organizations, called "step of Yu", which is very similar to the maçŷ walk, although a little more complicated. I had learned about the JPS conference from Maridort, but I had not had any other details about it. I had seen a portrait of the character some time ago, and had indeed been struck by his ugliness; what you say about his attitude is surely also a very unfavorable sign... It is really amazing that someone could say that he would have his place at Gŷ Tŷ!

Take all your time for the questions of another order which you propose to speak to me, because it is obviously much less urgent than what concerns the ritual. -- The reindeer antler must surely add something special to the general symbolism of the horns; it also makes me think of the representation of the Gallic god Kernunnos.

Send me the draft ritual as soon as it is ready; I will try not to delay until the less possible to examine it.

Convey to Fŷ Marty my congratulations on his report to the last Coven, which I have just read and which I find excellent.

Good fratŷ to you.

RG

I would also like to point out a ritual detail that seems completely unknown in France: officers should always, to approach their plateau and to leave it, conform to the meaning of the circumambulations.

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Cairo, June 21, 1948.

T.ŷCŷFŷ,

Your letter of June 4 reached me 5 or 6 days ago, but I was not able to reply to it immediately as I would have liked, having had to finish my articles for the July-August issue of "ET" which I was preparing at the time. Besides, I have been quite tired lately, which has put me more late than ever for everything; and, although it is better now, it is not quite over yet. It is to be hoped that it will not be the same when you send me the draft ritual, and I want to believe that, from on your side, the health problems that you also had lately are now over and will not reappear.

What Marty told you about his report is correct, but at least it proves that he assimilated certain ideas well, and also, as you say, that he knew how to present them to an unprepared audience. , which is really not very easy...

Thanks in advance for the seal impression; ordinarily, it is employed to stamp all the parts having an official character, in order to give them a guarantee of authenticity. As for the application of the seal on the recipient's arm, according to the indications of all the rituals that I have had the opportunity to see, it is only a simulacrum; and I must say that I don't know how long ago the thing was really done; it's probably not impossible, but I don't know where we could find the proof.

The three candles framing the painting must be placed in the East, South and West, the North alone not being illuminated; they also correspond to the places occupied (at least normally) by the three principal Officers (and to the three "stations" of Vishnu). It is quite probable, as you say, that it is these three candles that are involved in the "ritual of the three lights", but, without knowing exactly this one in detail, I have the impression that there must be a fairly large part of fantasy there!

The wearing of gloves is most certainly of operational origin; in the same way as that of the sword in certain circumstances, the use of coats of arms etc., it constituted, in the Middle Ages, one of the privileges granted to certain corporations and which assimilated them to a certain extent to the nobility; there would be very curious research to do on this subject which obviously has a very direct relationship with the question of the relationship between craft initiations and chivalry. On the other hand, from the symbolic point of view, the white color of the gloves expresses the idea of purity (in the ritual sense), so that their wearing during work corresponds to the affirmation, which is found in the Islamic tradition, that, "while a man works his hands are always pure". So you see that it is not indifferent to maintain or to reestablish, insofar as circumstances permit, this use of gloves, which moreover the English Maçŷ has always preserved. I think, however, that the gloves should be considered only as part of the decoration, in the same way as the cord (which was originally the baldric from which the sword was suspended), the clothing consisting exclusively of the apron ; and, in this connection, I call your attention to the necessity of requiring the wearing of the Maitre's apron, which has been so generally abandoned in France. -- Regarding the cord, its regulatory width must be exactly four inches (= 108 mm); I am reporting this to you because I

I know that some scenery manufacturers thought they could "round up" this figure to 11 cm without inconvenience; which is an error. -- One more thing while I get to these details: Venÿ should always be covered during outfits, because he is considered to always work at the rank of Master; in Mastery attire, all FFÿ must have their heads covered.

The "Tracing board reading" is the explanation of the symbols appearing in the grade table; I don't need to say that, in general, it remains unfortunately rather superficial and has above all a "moral" character...

For the use of "jargon" in the drafting of the minutes, we are fully agree.

I think, although I have never seen anything formal about it, that the table should already be drawn before the 1st question posed by Ven.. and which is basically part of the opening ritual; besides, it goes without saying that, from this moment on, it would be necessary to find a means of avoiding all more or less profane conversations. -- I entirely share your appreciation on the "columns of harmony"; songs would certainly be preferable, but on the condition of finding some that have an "adequate" character; unfortunately, those of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, at least according to all that I know of them, are rather insignificant and without initiatory or symbolic value and I do not really know how this deficiency could be remedied.

As to the direction of travel, there must indeed be some confusion, and this probably goes back quite a long way; it would seem, according to various indications, that those of the first degree must be "solar" and those of the 2° "polar", but it is not clear what reason could be given for this difference.

The enumeration of Officers could no doubt be introduced, but, basically, I don't think that's very important.

I don't know if there are rituals where the works are closed by the first Survÿ instead of Venÿ; have you seen anything like this?

The columns of the two Survÿ should doubtless, as you say, be of a different order; if so, that of the first must certainly be Doric, but would not that of the second be Ionic rather than Corinthian?

For the instruction given to new initiates, Marty's idea seems excellent to me, as it does to you, and quite worthy of approval; it is quite certain that the comments should not be incorporated into the text itself and that there would be every advantage in replacing them by explanatory notes where one could indeed introduce a lot of information of all kinds. The difficulty seems to me above all to be not to give these notes an excessive extent; in any case, it goes without saying that you can send me the project and that, for that too, I am ready to help you as much as I can.

The modification of certain formulas for reasons of opportunity, as you propose, seems to me to present no inconvenience, because "Truth" is in all traditions one of the main names of God, and "Wisdom, Strength, Beauty" cannot be considered otherwise than as divine attributes, so that it

there is not the slightest "idolatry" there. -- The invocation should be pronounced by the Speaker, since it is he who, in France, takes the place of the Chaplain; moreover, this invocation is called in English "oration", and I have always thought that the very designation of the Speaker actually came from an ambiguity about the meaning of this word.

Another thing while I think about it: you may know that, for the ordering of the first degree, there is a certain difference between the French Maçÿ and the English Maçÿ; in this, the hand and forearm should be placed horizontally, which seems to fit better with the meaning of "penalty"; but it would probably be very difficult to modify on this point the habits acquired...

A point on which there are divergent opinions is whether the sword should be held in the left hand or in the right hand; I remember having had a discussion about this a long time ago with Fÿ Dyvrande, who was then a member of the Council of the Order of Gÿ Oÿ. He thought it ridiculous to hold the sword in his left hand, while it seems to me on the contrary that this can very well be justified by the fact that it has here above all a sense of protection and not of attack. This naturally entails a small modification in the ritual, for it is obvious that, if one holds the sword in the right hand, one cannot put oneself in order at the same time; in this case we could not therefore say: "Stand up and to order, my FFÿ, sword in hand", but the words "and to order" would have to be deleted and then say: "Lower your swords and come to order", which is indeed found in a few rituals. I am content to point out the matter to you; You'll tell me what you think about it.

There are no doubt many other details that should be examined more closely, but it is impossible to think of them all at once, and I see nothing more for today. .

The Fÿ Maridort will be able, on occasion, to share with you what I have written to him about the trips of the 2nd degree, although of course it is not of immediate urgency; it is above all for the corresponding tools that there are many more or less discordant versions.

***Well done to you.***

RG

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Cairo, July 31, 1948.

TÿCÿFÿ,

Your letter of July 9 reached me a few days ago, just at the same time as the draft ritual transmitted by Fÿ Maridort, or at least what has already been done, because it is still incomplete and it seems that the rest will not be ready until August 20; it was therefore surely better to send it to me without delay. -- Thank you for all the explanations you give me on the conditions under which this project was developed; it is certain that, especially given the delay with which the necessary documentation was provided to you, you had very little time, and that this may have somewhat hindered the drafting. As for the changes made

by Marty, I can't figure out exactly what they are, having not seen the primitive draft, and it may be that some, like the one you pointed out to me about the union chain, are a bit regrettable; but, if a few minor concessions were needed to get the essentials accepted, it would probably be better not to insist, and surely Marty must know what it is possible to do with the present environment. In any case, the odd formula "let the colÿ stand on their bases", which I had never seen anywhere, is fortunately not found in the writing I received! -- You will find attached some observations, of which I send also the copy to Maridort for more safety, because it is always to be feared that a letter does not mislay on the way. Among these observations, there are some which relate only to negligence of form, but some are more important; I particularly point out to you the fact that we have unfortunately forgotten to put the formula of the consecration in harmony with that of the opening! It should also be noted that nowhere is there any mention of the compass and square placed on the Sacred Book; I believe this should be mentioned expressly, since this is an absolutely essential point. As for the questions to the visitors who have remained incomplete, I wonder if it wouldn't simply come from the fact that a sheet is missing at the end of the opening ritual. -- The most debatable issue is that of the different direction in which trips are made; I can't find a plausible reason for it, and I really don't know what to do about it; in any case, it is quite certain that the final passage through the middle of the Lÿ is an impossibility once the use of the painting is restored...

I remember having seen somewhere the indication of the "magic frame", but I don't know where; it did not appear in the ritual of Thébah, of which, on the other hand, I recognize certain other points, in particular with regard to the "little light" (although this could also be found elsewhere). -- What I saw of Fÿ Minot in his "Revue Maçÿ" was far from transcendent; so I'm rather amazed at this praise of symbolism that he inserted into his ritual. -- As for the English ritual (?) used by GT, I wonder, according to the singularities that you point out to me, if it would not simply be a ritual of the "Co-Masonry"; I'll be curious to see more when you have time. -- The mention of the orders of chivalry, in connection with the presentation of the apron, has unfortunately disappeared, and that of the "great honours" has resumed its place; I suppose that this must be one of the points on which the Commission will have made objections... -- It is true that the value of the ritual of "Emulation" is quite discussed, especially in America, and I have formerly seen various articles about it; it is a pity that you could not have other English rituals to make comparisons; I couldn't tell you anything precise on this subject, except that some claim that it would be that of the Gÿ Lÿ of Ireland which would come closest to that of the "Ancients". -- It is surely surprising, on the other hand, that we could not find an older French text; there must however exist a fairly large number of manuscript notebooks from the 18th century; the Gÿ Oÿ library must have had some, but I have no idea what state it is in now.

I entirely approve of the way in which you propose to proceed for the 2° and 3° degrees; it will indeed be better to leave it to Marty to do the

"adjustments" demanded by the mentality of the majority. -- For the embarrassing points of the 2nd degree, I have always had the impression that the enumeration of the five orders of architecture was somewhat artificial, because of the addition of the last two; but no doubt it would be good to see what is said on this subject in Vitruvius, which I believe to be the only "source" to which one can refer. -- Not having at my disposal a reproduction of the English painting, I will ask you if it would be possible for you to send me one, so that I can realize the differences which exist with the French painting. -- I will try to talk to you later about the other questions: just remind me of them in due time. -- About the meaning of the journeys of the 2nd degree, in connection with Pythagoreanism, a book has just been sent to me in which there may be some information; I will also tell you about it when I have had time to read it.

I also received JB's book, but I haven't read it yet either; I was a little surprised to see that he had it published by a secular publisher... -- I did not think that the correspondence of Goldy and Secry with the Sun and the Moon had ever been challenged!

I don't have the closing ritual yet, but I think it will ultimately have to be done by the 1st survy, according to the sentence in the opening one. -- There is indeed an apparent discrepancy between the setting sun and the hour of midnight, but, for the opening, is there not also a similar one between the rising sun and the hour of midnight? noon ? The sacred word and the password of the 3rd degree (which are inverted to the French rite) seem to be in reality only different deformations of the same word, which moreover cannot have in Hebrew any of the meanings which attributed to him...

What you say about the ritual elements through which the transmission of the spiritual influence can take place, in the absence of the consecration which is its normal support, seems to me quite correct, and it would indeed seem that, in the ritual Masonry, everything has been arranged in such a way as to remedy the effects of possible negligence or alteration, as if it had been foreseen that they were likely to occur in fact. It is however understood that it must stop at a certain point, even if it is difficult to specify it exactly: the Gý Lumý and even the obligation (completed by the proclamation) can really serve as supports, but is it possible to go much further in this direction? -- The comparison you make with what can also occur for certain rites of an exoteric order, and particularly with regard to priestly ordination in Christianity, is very interesting; moreover, it does not seem to me to be in doubt that it must be the laying on of hands which here constitutes the most essential element. I did not know at all what you pointed out to me about the apostolic succession in the Scandinavian Church, but I have just read today, in n° 12 of "Living God", the report of a book devoted precisely to this question.

Thanks for the Dürer engraving; the mountain in the background, with the fortified town at its summit, clearly reminds me of Montsalvat. -- The biographical information about Dürer is interesting too, and it certainly raises some pretty complex questions; the initiatory character of many of his works, and also of certain marks that he put there, is not doubtful in any case; he has

surely he was attached to certain artisan initiatory organizations, and he was also in this way in relation with personages belonging to other initiatory organizations of a more or less different character (hermetic and perhaps Rosicrucian); but the most difficult question is obviously to know to what degree it was able to actually reach and if, to a certain extent at least, it did not serve above all as an "instrument" to convey and express certain things before the Modern obscuration does require them to go entirely into shadow. As for his Lutheran sympathies, which however never went so far as to join), I confess that there is something there which appears to me as embarrassing as to you; it is true that one should not always rely on external appearances, which sometimes cover very different things; and, when you say that there are Protestants and Protestants, there are in fact, even apart from what you cite, clues which could lead one to think so. On this subject, I once heard some rather extraordinary things said by Canon Paquier, who had made a specialty of studying Luther: according to him, the theses defended by the latter were in reality quite common for a long time in the Augustinian Order to which he belonged, and the causes of the break with Rome would have been much less doctrinal than political, so much so that the responsibility should be imputed not to Luther himself, but to certain German princes who would have used him for their own purposes; and he notably gave as proof of this that the Augustinian general, Seripando, maintained at the Council of Trent opinions almost identical to that of Luther, and more moderate in form only, and that, far from being excommunicated or even blamed for this, he was on the contrary made Cardinal! On the other hand, Pastor Lecerf, professor at the Faculty of Protestant Theology, who was strictly Calvinist and did not like Lutheranism, maintained that Calvin's theology was basically in perfect agreement with that of Saint Thomas, and he - even did not hesitate to declare himself openly Thomist: The opposition of Luther and Calvin would have been in sum, according to this, only a new form of that of Augustinism and Thomism. All this is obviously very far from the ultra modern spirit of the so-called "liberal" Protestants...

The F.-D. is indeed a truly lamentable thing and which gives a sad idea of the mentality of certain people and certain milieus; I'm going to have to occupy myself these days with arranging extracts from his factum and answering them, because I think like Clavelle that it would be a real shame to let such a document fall into oblivion; According to the latest news, it seems, according to what Fy Gilliard tells us, that this individual is now proposing to write a whole book against me! -- The plates where the serpent figures in the ornamentation of chasubles and stoles are all the more curious as the source from which they come cannot give rise to the slightest suspicion of "esotericism"; but I believe that there is in Mr. F. -D. too much vanity and bad faith at the same time for anything to make him recognize that he asserted erroneous things. We can obviously expect everything of this kind, but I would not have expected such an overflow of "satanic" hatred and inconceivable rudeness...

As for the Carmelites, it certainly seems to me that for a long time now, and no doubt since their "reform" in a purely mystical sense, there no longer exists

with them no esotericism; but I do not know to what period the modifications which have been made to their liturgy date back; in any case, it seems that currently (this information comes to me from a Trapist Father) they are pushing exterior formalism to a point that goes beyond anything one can imagine. The mention of Pythagoras alongside Elijah in the old Carmelite liturgy had been pointed out to me by Charbonneau-Lassay, who had also shown me the symbols of an undeniably initiatic character, and some even specifically Rosicrucian, that of Carmelites of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th had traced on the walls of their old monastery of Loudun; and I will add that I have the impression, although it is not easy for me to justify it, that this is perhaps not as far removed as one might think from the question of the organizations with which Dürer could have been related.

**Well frat   ŷ   to you.**

RG

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Cairo, August 31, 1948.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

I received your letter of August 16 a few days ago; thank you for sending me your draft ritual. -- I am glad to know that you will be able to obtain the other English rituals; I have no idea what the one called "Sound Usage" might be. -- The remarks you made by Fÿ Mercier, from what you tell me, seem correct to me, and I don't see that there could be any inconvenience to the "transfer" of the cable-tow in the instruction. -- About the instruction, it is naturally not in what I have of the project of Fÿ Marty, and which stops just after the delivery of the two pairs of gloves.

I must point out something that I had forgotten the last time and which is also found in your version: it is that the addition of the words "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité," following the he traditional acclamation seems to me quite unjustified, and that it even has a rather profane character; in Thebah, formerly, it was not admitted. What is most curious is that the real origin of this motto is in an anti-Masonic writing of the 18th century; Unfortunately, I cannot currently find the precise reference. It goes without saying that the occultist legend which attributes it to L. -Cl. of Saint Martin is absolutely based on nothing, any more than so many others of the same kind.

Another thing again: in the drawing of the painting, the stars seem to be in any number whatsoever (I see 16 of them); however, it seems to me that regularly there should be only 7.

It's very possible that, as you say, Marty didn't have time to sort out the apron issue; on the other hand, I see that, in his version, certain passages have been shortened and others, on the contrary, lengthened, I don't really know why. It would hardly be possible for me to point out to you in detail these various changes, many of which are doubtless not of great importance; but I think besides that you must have seen all that by now, if Marty has returned to Paris as is probable.

A note of detail: I think that it is necessary to write "cabinet of reflection" as did Marty, rather than "of reflections" in the plural as I see it in your manuscript; moreover, the substitution of the word "chambre" for "cabinet" seems to me rather unusual here.

In the opening, the enumeration of officers is not found in Marty; its interest obviously lies in the division "3 and 4", which gives the Pythagorean right-angled triangle, and which could be considered as a reminder of the role it played in the opening of an operative Lÿ.

You were quite right to mention in a note the case where the oath should be loaned out of a sacred book other than the Bible; that too is gone.

For the points that you point out to me, the fact of discovering oneself by naming the Gÿ Aÿ is only a concession to Western customs; we can undoubtedly maintain it, but nevertheless it should be noted that it is completely at odds with the Hebrew elements of the ritual, so much so that in reality it would be better for the Venÿ always to remain covered.

When talking about the accessories intended to produce the noises, I was mainly thinking of a kind of metal barrel containing stones, which seems interesting to me because it probably goes back a long way. Carl Hentz, in his book "Lunar Myths and Symbols", points out that, in a sacred dance of a certain Indian tribe, "the sound of thunder is rendered by a box filled with stones being shaken" (I just m see, by researching this, that it is in this same book that the figuration of the "dance of the deer" of which I spoke to you is found). I even wonder if, moreover, this instrument would not have some relationship with the "rhomboid" of the mysteries of antiquity, of which no one seems to know exactly what it was.

For the oath, I have also often seen the formula that you have adopted, but I believe that it is linked to the fact that the essential use of placing the 3 Gÿ Lÿ on the altar had been abandoned. In any case, the compass given to the recipient to hold must be another than that which is placed on the Book, and which, like the square, must never be moved during the work. If we want to keep the part of the formula relating to the sword, we must naturally then bring the flaming sword of Venÿ in front of the recipient.

I fully approve of the "softenings" that you point out to me, and also, for the "little light", the removal of the "corpse" which has always seemed a little theatrical to me. For the consecration, it seems that the three blows must be struck only on the crown of the head and not be repeated on each shoulder, because that would make a total of nine blows, a number which belongs only to the rank of Master and not to that of an apprentice.

For the instruction, I will only point out to you, for the moment, that, in old catechisms, the 1st question is formulated as follows: "What is there in common between you and me? -- R. The truth. " -- For the dimensions of the Lÿ, we find: "Its height, -- From the earth to the sky. -- Its depth? -- From the surface of the earth to its center (or, according to another version, cubits without number)."

Of the two arrangements you have indicated for the union chain, I cannot say which is preferable; but I wonder why, in

one is in the other, the places of Trésÿ and Mÿ des Cérÿ, and also those of Hospÿ and Expÿ, are found inverted; is there any reason for this?

I don't have the JT Lawrence book you refer to, only one titled "By-ways of Freemasonry"; it seems to me that the "coat of arms" of the ancient corporation of Masons was much less complicated than that of which he gives the description, and there may be many more or less recent additions there; Unfortunately, I still can't remember where I could find it...

The planetary correspondences of the officers indicated by JB are truly bizarre indeed; he is at least happy that he did not keep them in his book! -- About his book, it must be recognized that he found the solution of some difficult questions (in particular the explanation of the acclamation, which is in conformity with that which I had indicated to you); but, on the other hand, there are interpretations which are a little too affected by occultist ideas and above all by "magical" preoccupations, and also some fantasies which are his own (like his project for an apron of a unpublished form), not to mention certain linguistic and other errors. In short, it is a book which is certainly not lacking in interest, but which can only be used with caution; what I really don't understand, despite what he says to justify himself in this respect, is that he had it edited so that it would be available to laymen (and I even suspect that this must be why he did not give it to Gloton, who surely would not have lent himself willingly to this distribution).

For what you tell me about the Fÿ Reghini, his great work on Pythagorean arithmetic, which he had just completed when he died, unfortunately seems hardly editable under present circumstances, because of the enormity of printing costs (it includes 1500 or 1600 pages all filled with mathematical formulas); following his instructions, it was handed over to one of his friends, prof. del Guercio, who must take care of the edition when possible, but who, moreover, is not a Mason. As for his notes and papers concerning the Maçÿ they are in the hands of Fÿ Giulio Parise, member of the Supÿ Consÿ; but I don't really know what might be there or what he will get out of it. In any case, you could at least see his posthumous book, "I Numeri Sacri nella Tradizione Pitagorica Massonica"; I no longer remember if R. Allar has it or someone else in Paris, but I asked him, in replying to his last letter, if it would be possible for him to lend it to you or to have it lent to you; otherwise, I'll have to ask the Fÿ. Rocco if he couldn't send you a copy. One must only beware that Reghini had so "specialized" in Pythagoreanism that he had come to consider all the elements that come from elsewhere, in the Maçÿ, as somehow accidental or even superimposed after the fact, which is obviously quite exaggerated.

About Pythagoreanism, I read the book to which I alluded the last time about the meaning of circumambulations: "The right and the left in the Homeric poems in agreement with the Pythagorean doctrine and with the Celtic tradition", by Joseph Cuillandre (Édition des Belles Lettres, 1944) but I must say

that I couldn't get much out of it. You might still see it in some library; you could moreover omit the first two chapters which contain nothing of interest from our point of view (it is hardly a question of fixing certain points relating to the topography of the combats around Troy). In the rest, and especially in the last chapter, there are considerations whose interest is not in doubt, but the presentation as a whole is terribly confused: the author reproaches Aristotle for not having understood the Pythagoreans, in which he is probably right, but I'm not quite sure that he himself understood them much better in reality. The reason for this is, it seems to me, that he was as if fascinated by the sole "solar" point of view, to the point of not seeing any other, even when he cites facts or texts which seem however not to relate to it; Unfortunately, I don't have much time to unravel all his arguments; maybe you could try it sometime. There would also be many comparisons to be made with other traditions that he probably ignores almost completely; however, it would have been enough for him to read the Bible, without going any further, to realize that the orientation towards the Levant is not specifically "Indo-European". I am thinking in particular, in saying this, of the question of the position of the two cols; the right in Hebrew is always the south and the left the north; the Arabic names of the cardinal points are no less significant in this respect, the inversion which occurred in the French Rite has always seemed to me rather difficult to explain.

I have not yet received your two works which you told me would be sent; perhaps we shouldn't be too surprised, because letters by ordinary post are often on the way for a long time!

Thank you for your good wishes for my health, which is not too bad at the moment, although I cannot say that the fatigue has completely disappeared; Well, don't complain too much when it's like this...

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, September 16, 1948.

TÿCÿFÿ,

Thank you for your letter of September 5, which I received yesterday, and for the various things you have attached to it; I am now reassured, because, having thought I understood that you had sent me your two travÿs quite a long time ago, I was beginning to fear that they were lost. -- Of course, you could not yet have received my last letter, which is of August 31, but I think you must probably have it now.

For the rituals of the GT, I find like you that there is nothing really abnormal except the passage on the "Spiritual Archives", which makes one think of the rantings of the theosophist "clairvoyants"; but it is the question of the real origin of the said ritual which seems very obscure, and what you are telling me on this subject is not very reassuring... -- On the subject of the fumigations, I had noticed this that you point out to me in the book

by JB, and I even wanted to ask one or the other of you what this book by Doctor R. was, to which he refers and which I had never heard of until now; I don't understand how he could have looked good in Allahabad (unless that's a purely fanciful indication, which wouldn't surprise me too much on R.'s part). I also wanted to ask if you have any information on this "Report of Pétrus Talémarianus" to which JB refers quite often, and which was published by Véga; I don't remember if it was Clavelle or someone else who had told me about it in the past, but I could never find out what it was

Exactly.

The appy English chart is quite complicated, and there are some details that are not very clearly distinguishable. I think what is seen below the book must be the IOI symbol which is peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon Maçÿ; do you know it ? There are indeed 7 stars as I told you that it should be regularly; but the respective positions of the sun and the moon seem to me reversed in a rather inexplicable way.

Thank you in advance for the next shipment of your 3rd degree ritual project; I didn't think you would have taken care of it before that of the 2nd; it is true that this gives rise to much less difficulty. As it is always good to gather as much information as possible, I will ask Marius Lepage if he could send you a copy of the ritual he elaborated for his Lÿ; I pointed out to him an anomaly concerning the situation of the 3 doors, which he recognizes moreover, and which is due to the place of the survÿs in the French Rite, so that he does not really know how to fix it ; this further confirms the need to re-establish their true place, which even in the Scottish Rite (in France at least), has been altered by a need for false symmetry.

What you say about the role of Alexander is certainly quite correct; moreover, I must have alluded to it in my article on the symbolism of the horns, which I cannot find at the moment; what is said of his relations with El-Khidr in the Islamic Tradition is very significant, and there are also, among other things, Romanian legends which are extremely curious. -- As to the passage of II Thess. that you mention, it is indeed possible that it relates to the Roman empire and its continuation, but I am not sure that there cannot be other interpretations as well, so that I would not know too much to tell you; if we had to adopt this one, it would obviously not be very reassuring for the immediate future...

I was very interested in your letter to Clavelle, because there are many historical details there that I did not know. I have often heard that in Rome the validity of Anglican ordinations is considered doubtful because it is not certain that there was not, at a certain time (I think it would be during of the Revolution) an interruption in the transmission, and that, for this reason, the ordination was repeated "under conditions"; but it is obvious that the intervention of the Orthodox bishops must change things and amount in sum to a "regularization". Another thing to note in the same order of ideas: the objects which were used for the coronation of the kings of England were destroyed under Cromwell, so that those which are employed currently are only simple recent reproductions of them; is there not something here which, apart from any other consideration,

can be of a nature to hamper the action of spiritual influences in such a case? For the cure of scrofula, it seems to me that there are two contradictory versions: one which relates its origin, for the kings of England, to Edward the Confessor, and the other which regards it as attached exclusively to the quality of King of France; What should we think ? -- The parallel you draw between the way in which the irregularities of the Anglican Church have been remedied and that of the Gŷ Lŷ of England is really curious and seems to me very fair.

I have only read your Appŷ and Compŷ work a little quickly, and I will speak to you about it next time; but they really look very good to me, and apart from what you have noticed yourself about the eye, I don't think there is much to correct. -- For the role of the 3-4-5 triangle in operative Macŷ, I will talk about it at the end of my article on "lost speech". I do believe that JB must have used my indication on the inequality of the branches of the square of Venŷ, although he omitted to quote me on this subject. -- It seems to me, from what you say about Reghini, that you must already know his book which I spoke to you about the last time; in this case, what I said to you on this subject naturally no longer has any reason to exist.

Good fratŷ to you.

RG

.....  
Cairo, September 30, 1948.

TŷCŷFŷ,

It is already a week since I received your letter of September 12, and I apologize for not having been able to find the time to answer it sooner. Fortunately, the questions are now of less immediate urgency than when it was still possible to make some modifications to the Ritual before the Coven; I hope that all will have gone well at this one, and that one or the other of you will give me news of it soon.

For the formula Lŷ Eŷ Fŷ, I see that you found the reference on which I had not been able to put my hand, and which I remember very well indeed now; this origin is obviously most suspect, especially since all the so-called rituals and catechisms contained in this book "The Crushed FFŷ MMŷ" are entirely invented and exceed anything that can be imagined as fantasy, not to mention an incredible story about the founding of Maçŷ by Cromwell! Despite this, I understand very well the reason why you think it is better at present to maintain the said formula following the ritual acclamation; as the re-establishment of the latter is in short the essential, this does not present any great inconvenience indeed; it is certain that one should not want to go too quickly for all that... -- As for the addition of the word "semper", it seems that it was not to be part of the primitive acclamation, but I have no idea when or how it was introduced.

About the 3 Lumŷ ritual, I finally understood, by reading JB's book, the reason for extinguishing candles with a mallet: it's so as not to blow on them!  
But don't we know that there is an instrument made just for that, which is called

a candle snuffer, and which, if it is no longer in such common use as in the days when people used candles for light, must at least still be used today in churches?

While I think of it, I must point out to you that I have found the dates of the first printed English rituals: 1838 (G. Claret), and then 1869 (A. Lewis); previously, there were only handwritten rituals in England. I find as an indication of the different rituals in use: Promulgation (1809-11), Reconciliation (1813-16), Stability (1820), Emulation (1823). -- Another remark: it is inaccurate to designate as "rite of York", as is often done, that which is currently practiced in England; the York rite was that of the "Ancients", and what has existed since the "Union" is in reality a kind of compromise between that and that of the "Moderns".

For the triangle 3 - 4 - 5, the enumeration of the Offy by three and four only does not change anything essential as regards the symbolism, because it can be regarded as corresponding to the two branches of the square of Veny; the third side is then somehow implied, and its "invisibility" is somehow related to Hiram's death. As for the role played by the triangle in question in the opening of the operative LLy, you have guessed correctly: it is indeed a triangle made with 3 sticks whose lengths are in the desired ratio; if I did not insist on this when I told you about it, it is because I intend to treat this point more completely in the last part of my article on the "Lost Word".

-- For the information on the operative Macy contained in the "Speculative Mason" and in its supplement, there are certainly exact things there, but that does not mean that they are entirely so on all points; what gave me some doubts on this subject, it is especially an allusion to the direction of the circumambulations which did not seem correct to me. On the other hand, it is quite obvious that an operative organization which admits women cannot be regular; I have already had occasion to speak of this to Clavelle; this is the reason that prevented me from looking for more information on this side as I had intended to do at a certain moment. -- I once saw, in a maçy American magazine, articles which contained more certain information, but unfortunately, as it goes back more than thirty years, I no longer know where to find them; maybe I'll still manage to get my hands on it one day or another. It seems to me, without being able to confirm it, that it must be in "The American Tyler Keystone"; we would have to look for that between 1909 and 1914; but who knows if a collection of this review could be in the library of the Gy Ly or that of the Gy Oy?

Since I spoke earlier about the meaning of circumambulations, I call your attention, in the book on the right and the left that I pointed out to you, to the passages where it is a question of a priority of the night over the day (we could also add many comparisons with other traditions than those mentioned there, starting with the first chapter of Genesis); this is one of the things which show most clearly that the exclusively "solar" interpretations of the author must not be exact, for Pythagoreanism as well as for the Celtic tradition.

The wand of Deacons is the ancient badge of messengers, heralds and ambassadors, representing the power delegated to them; it therefore has no relation to that of the 3 MMÿ of the operative LLÿ (which is essentially a "measurement"), but it nonetheless deserves to be kept. As for the crossed chopsticks above the recipient's head, I must admit that I don't know exactly what that corresponds to or whether it's a really very old practice, and I don't really see where we could do research at this subject ; but, in any case, I do not believe that there can be any inconvenience in maintaining it. -- In the case where there is no initiatory consecration as such, you are absolutely right to think that the transmission of the spiritual influence takes place at the moment when the Lumÿ is given; but, to tell the truth, the French ritual seems to me more complete than the English ritual on this point. I have always had the impression, moreover, that some peculiarities prior to 1717 had been preserved in France which were not maintained or re-established in England; only, it is quite difficult to say where they could have come from, the question of the existence of LLÿ "stuartists" in the 17th century, which would explain it quite naturally, being still very controversial.

In my time, in Gÿ Lÿ, it was only in Thebah that the Masters wore the apron; in Gÿ Oÿ, about the same time, Fÿ Blatin vigorously demanded his reinstatement, but, despite his authority as Gÿ Commÿ of the Gÿ Collÿ of the Rites, he was never able to obtain any result.

The coats of arms of the different Scottish ranks, which bring together the main symbols of each of them, have nothing to do with the coats of arms of the old corporations; but the "coat of arms" of the English corporation of masons is well known; Unfortunately, I no longer remember where to find the description. I do not know of any work on this subject of the quasi-nobiliary privileges of corporations, which is moreover one of those that "official" historians consider it good to pass over in silence; it was especially Charbonneau-Lassay who spoke to me about it in the past, but I don't know if there could be any notes on it in his papers; I will have to try to find out about it from time to time.

There is no doubt that Dorian and Ionian are generally (and not only with regard to the orders of architecture), considered, in a way, as two complementary ones, the first corresponding to the masculine principle and the second to the feminine principle, what their very names seem to indicate rather clearly.

I think it is decidedly appropriate to maintain the use of the sword held in the left hand; you are quite right to speak in this connection of a use of the "power of the points". By a rather curious coincidence, I have just seen a very clear passage on this subject in the recent book by Fÿ Fauré-Frémiet (Page 38), which however contains very few allusions to initiatory symbolism.

For the position of the hand at the Order of Appÿ, you are right about the difficulty of keeping the English attitude for a long time; as it is not of primary importance, it is therefore probably only necessary to keep the French usage, but it should at least be "unified".

Thank you for the seal impression; it is very good, but does it not have the disadvantage

to be a little big to be affixed easily on certain documents?

The figure of the "sorcerer" of the cave of the three Brothers is really curious, and it reminded me of a representation that I cannot find at the moment, of the "deer dance" among the Hopi Indians (North America); this comparison is just as singular as the one you made with the Siberian Shaman.

I hope to receive soon your two works which you announce to me the sending; it is understood that I will not fail to tell you very frankly what I think of it.

I am happy to know that you have completely recovered; as for me, while doing much better now, I still feel a certain fatigue, but it is to be hoped that all the same it will end up happening completely...

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, October 8, 1948

TÿCÿFÿ,

Your letter of September 27 has reached me in recent days, at the same time as a letter from Fÿ Maridort to which was attached Fÿ Marty's report; but, contrary to what you thought, he does not tell me about the last outfit of the Convent, having probably not been able to find the time (he obviously didn't want to wait any longer to send me the report), and he only gives me the list of new GGÿ Offÿ

You can imagine how happy I was with the good news you told me, and I thank you for sharing it with me without delay. I would ask you to once again convey to Fÿ Marty all my congratulations, first for his report itself, which is excellent, and then for the great success he has obtained, and which truly exceeds anything that could have been to hope! I understand that it was feared that this presentation might seem too long and too arduous to an audience, the majority of which is certainly unaccustomed to considerations of this order, but I see that fortunately it was not. It is remarkable that there were no protests on any point, nor even any contradiction during the discussion, since all those who intervened in it did little but press in the same direction. Everything you tell me about the attitude of the delegates, for the rest as well as for that, is moreover very interesting and proves that something has really changed... -- I believe that it will be very good, to take advantage of this first success, to prepare the rituals of the other degrees so as to be able to present them as soon as possible as the Fÿ Marty intends.

The wish that there be no more than one Consÿ Fedÿ per Lÿ was indeed quite threatening to the Gÿ Tÿ, and fortunately it was rebuffed; I wonder however if, in the event that it would have been adopted, the fact that it is about FFÿ belonging at the same time to other LLÿ would not have allowed despite everything to circumvent the difficulty.

About the Gŷ Commŷ of the Supŷ Consŷ, I have always wondered what could be the exact reasons for the hostility that exists between him and Cerf (the latter even claimed that it also affected me, while everything else I know shows the opposite); do you know anything about this?

I'm glad to know that you got to know the Fŷ Granger; as I said to Fŷ Maridort, I have an excellent impression of him; in his last letter he told me that he hoped that it would be possible to arrange some meeting when he went to Paris, but I did not know that it would be on the occasion of the Convent.

I believe, from the conclusions of the report, that the draft ritual will have to be printed before long to be submitted for the study of the LLŷ; if so, I hope it will be possible to send a copy to our FFŷ in Naples who expect to be able to soon found an Lŷ working in a truly traditional spirit, and who would like to have this ritual on as soon as possible, not only for their own use, but also so that they can present it to the authorities of the Gŷ Oŷ of Italy. You may know that this one is now a regular Scottish Obŷ, having obtained, despite the efforts of several rival Obŷs, the recognition of the Confederate Supŷ Conŷ.

Regarding operative Masonry, I forgot the last time to tell you that Marius Lepage pointed out to me a book recently published in England and entitled "The Genesis of the Freemasonry", which contains, it seems, a lot of new or at least little known documents on this subject. I gave the indication to Clavelle so that he would ask for the service for the "ETs; it is to be hoped that he will obtain it, although certain editors are not always very complacent...

Good fratŷ to you.

RG

.....  
Cairo, October 19, 1948.

TŷCŷFŷ,

It's already been a week since I received your letter of October 3, and I would have answered it sooner had it not been for the severe flu from which I am only just beginning to recover; the cold came very early this year, and we currently have a temperature here which is usually that of December!.

The reason that you explain to me for not starting the tracing of the Tŷ Bŷ until after the inspection of the Colŷ seems to me on the whole very correct; if it is certain that there is indeed sufficient time for it to be finished at the desired time (it is of course easy to experience this), then it will only be necessary to proceed in this way; it goes without saying that everything must be finished when the opening is announced. -- I also agree with you on the proper moment for the ignition of the 3 Lumŷ; if this one definitely has to be done by the main Offŷ, I don't see much inconvenience after all, but I agree with you that simple candlesticks would be better, which should probably be placed around the TŷBŷ; as to their extinction, I

think it would be good to take into account what I told you the last time about the use of the extinguisher instead of the mallet....

I was familiar with the caricature representing an Lÿ of animals, but I confess that I had not noticed the similarity of all its details with those of the engraving reproduced by Alice Joly; it is quite striking indeed, and it is quite probable, as you say, that it is a "markdown". -- As for the layout of the 3 Lumÿ, I don't think it's incorrect; it is indeed in relation with the poses of the first 3 fundamental stones in the order NE, SE, SW; the fourth angle, NW, is naturally that which remains in darkness, and this conforms well to the path of the sun. The correspondence of the 3 Lumÿ must also follow the same order: S. to the NE, Fÿ to the SE, Bÿ to the SW; in this way, if they were supposed to be placed at the very angles of Lÿ, each of the 3 main Offÿ would have the corresponding Lumÿ on its right; it should be noted, moreover, that the direction of the movement of the sun thus goes from this Lumÿ towards it, which is not without significance either. -- As for the side where the hinge of the door should be, I don't quite understand your thought, since this door is generally double-leafed, so that there are hinges on each side.

For the way of addressing the candidate, it must be taken into account that, in English, it is common practice, in the secular world, to address someone by calling him by his name, while that in French, on the contrary, this is considered, depending on the case, either as the mark of a lack of education (for example among the peasants), or as indicating a somewhat contemptuous intention (when one wants to make the someone who is looked upon as an inferior). Under these conditions, I believe that it is not possible to call the candidate other than "Monsieur" without more, and that it is only himself who must repeat his first and last name for the obligation.

It seems to me that there would indeed be interest in restoring symbols I and II; for the 1°, you must remember that I exposed in the "Great Triad" some considerations which relate to it. As for the 2°, you no doubt know that it is considered to be more particularly in relation with the two Saint Johns; in fact, it effectively represents the annual solar cycle bounded by the two solstices; it has sometimes been remarked that, for this representation to be entirely correct, the two tangents should be horizontal; but it is very probable that their vertical position is due to an assimilation with the two colÿ, which indeed, under one of their aspects, also have this meaning (Cf. in particular the symbolism of the columns of Hercules). -- What I have just said also has a certain relationship with some points of the work of Fÿ Mercier, which are moreover among those which it does not seem to me to have succeeded in completely disentangling...

Appÿ tools. are the "heavy maul" and the chisel; I do not know if there is any difference between this "heavy maul" and the "common gavel" which I have seen mentioned also sometimes, but it seems to me that they must be 2 names for the same thing; in any case, it is a tool that is used to roughen the stones before the size itself; I don't see what connection it could have with the idea of sacrifice. -- About the English Tÿ Bÿ, there is precisely a study on this subject in the July issue of "Speculative Mason"; reading it, I finally understood

what are the objects that I could not distinguish in the drawing you sent me: these are the emblems of the 3 theological virtues, placed on the steps of Jacob's ladder. According to the historical information contained in the same article, the current form of this Tŷ Bŷ only dates from 1849; previously there was a great variety in the designs; it seems that the introduction of Jacob's ladder was an innovation. -- About the "Speculative Mason", the idea of the Fŷ Mercier seems excellent to me, if you have at your disposal a complete collection (I myself only have a rather small part of it); it would certainly be a lot of work, but it is so difficult to find anything in there that carefully classified excerpts would surely be of great service.

It will be very interesting if the Fŷ Granger can get you specific information on Swiss rituals; the connection you make about the coin or the medal is at least not implausible, since the Mark Masonry is considered to have a more direct link with the rank of Compŷ -- The "white stone" is obviously an allusion to the Apocalypse; I remember that there was in the "Speculative Mason" a study on the "Pilgrim's Progress" where it was also discussed. 2 distinct degrees, those of Mark Man and Mark Master; in any case, the "Mark Master's token" (I don't think the word "Tessera" is usually used) is indeed the "Temple currency" modified as to the shape of the characters as I told you (I have one here); the figure of this same currency was also adopted as a seal by the "King Solomon's Temple Lodge", which is one of the most "selections" of England. It represents on one side the vase of manna and on the other the rod of Aaron, which were two of the objects preserved in the Ark of the Covenant; the reproduction of the authentic currency (with old form characters) is found in one of the plates of S. Munk's work on Palestine (picturesque universe collection).

I don't believe that operative rituals were ever written down; at least, if they are today, that can only be something recent, but even that seems doubtful to me. Speculative Masons are certainly not admitted as visitors to operative LLŷ; it is also the same in the Compagnonnage (except in the very bastardized and very untraditional organization which is called "Union Compagnonique"). -- What you are telling me about the possible way of realizing the Pythagorean triangle at the moment of the chŷ of union seems to me on the whole admissible, although naturally it can never be the real equivalent of the operative rite of opening. -- In the operative LLŷ, the name of El-shaddaï is expressly mentioned in the invocation pronounced at the opening by the Chaplain (Broŷ Jakŷ); your remark on the number 345 of this name is correct, but there are still other rather remarkable things. Shaddai alone has the number 314, which is also important; it is at the same time the number of Metatron, and moreover, in Arabic, it is the number of the "developed" name of Mohammed (Fŷ Maridort will be able to communicate to you the explanation that I gave him on this last point). On the other hand, 345 is not only the number of El-Shaddai, but also that of ha-Shem (the Name), as well as of Mesheh, the Hebrew form of the name of Moses, which is moreover the

exact reversal of ha-Shem. -- I wonder if, "The special sign of the Triangle" relates well to the Pythagorean triangle, or if it would not rather be a question here of a sign analogous to that of the "Royal Arch of Henoc", apparently derived of the sign of the blessing of the Kohanim to which I alluded in my article on the "Lost Word", and of which a more singular deformation could perhaps, although almost unrecognizable (which may moreover be intended in this case), end up in the "horror sign" of the rank of Master.

I have not yet had the information concerning the two works cited by J. B.; Besides, I haven't had a letter from Clavelle for quite a long time, but I doubtless hope to have one soon, for there are now several from me to which he has not yet replied.

Good Fratÿ to you.

RG

.....

Cairo, November 5, 1948.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

Your two letters of October 11 and 18 arrived at the same time, a week ago already; if I couldn't answer it earlier this time again, it's because I had to finish my work for the December issue of "ET", for which I was rather late, after which came proofs of the Italian translation of the "previews" which I also had to correct as quickly as possible.

I thank you first of all for giving me a summary of the speeches of the closing dress of the Convent, which indeed make as satisfying an impression as possible. Fÿ Maridort told me that if he hadn't told me about it, it was because he thinks the report will soon be printed and that he intends to tell me. send immediately. -- The only point that is a little worrying in what you tell me is the intention that some would have to increase recruitment, which obviously could only be to the detriment of quality...

What you say about the reason for Cerf's animosity against the Gÿ Commÿ is not implausible indeed, given all that we know of his character; his claim to know everything is really quite extraordinary; but what has it ever had to do with modern scientific inventions? As for his plan to found a Chapÿ of Royal Arche, I don't see any more than you how that would be possible, unless he starts by becoming affiliated with the Gÿ Lÿ Natÿ, which could open up a "gate" on the English Maçÿ; but, even so, it would in any case only be feasible in the fairly long term!

About the F.º. Mercier, what you are telling me corresponds to the impression I had of it; I believe, like you, that this defect that I had noticed in his work, and which indeed has something to do with the "spirit of the system", should be able to be corrected little by little with reflection. -- For his project for the "True Experts", it is necessary to make a remark: it is that the "servants" are in reality quite another thing than deacons; they are subordinate employees who can never have more than the rank of App.º., and who, moreover, do not participate in the work and do not enter the

L.°. only when they are called there to discharge some commission.

I had learned the vote of the Convent from G.°. O.°. on the question of the SS.°. of D.°. H.°. ; the minority was despite everything stronger than it would have been desirable.°. It seems that the rapporteur has pointed out the initiatory side of the question, using my article on female initiation; it was Lepage who asked me to write it for this occasion.

I have enough of your opinion on the ritual of Marius Lepage; we should certainly not follow him in his excess of simplification; he seems to have been struck by the often awkward and more or less ridiculous way in which the "promenades" of which he speaks are carried out, but it goes without saying that a way can be found to remedy this without simply suppressing them; the comparisons you make with the ancient mysteries are entirely justified. It's a pity that he still suffers from the lingering influence of O. Wirth, because otherwise he is quite sympathetic and certainly full of goodwill.

For the extinction of candles, the use of the mallet is surely an innovation which has no reason to exist, and I find in any case the extinguisher much preferable, since it is made expressly for that; but, as for the prohibition to blow on it, it exists to my knowledge only in Mazdeism.

On the subject of the elements existing in the Maç.°. French and which, not being able to come from the G.°. L.°. of England, must have an origin prior to this one, it is quite curious that Monsieur Lepage, in a letter which I received the day before yesterday, also made the same remark without my having mentioned it to him in the least. He talks to me again about "The Genesis of Freemasonry", which, it seems, was preceded by two other books, "Early Masonic Pamphlets" and "The Early Masonic Catechisms", I don't know if it will be possible to have them, but I think it would be very important, because there are completely new things about symbolism and operative ritual. It is in this connection that he says: "It emerges from this reading that French Maç.°, even in its present state, is closer to the primitive spirit of ancient Maç.°. than G.°. L.°. of England. I found in Knoop some astounding pages on this subject, particularly as regards the drafting of Anderson's Constitutions." -- On the other hand, you will see in my next reports that I made an allusion to the probable anteriority of Maç.°. French, about a note published in "Masonic Light". -- Another thing again: I had been struck by the fact that the T.°. B.°. French to an incontestably more archaic character than the T.°. B.°. English; what I pointed out to you the last time, on the very recent date of the latter in its present form, moreover gives a sufficient explanation of it.

For your reflections on the same subject, it is quite certain that the impression that French Masons have who visit the LL.°. foreigners comes above all from the fact that everything is done there with a seriousness and a dignity to which they are not accustomed; this is certainly not the proof of a greater understanding, but it is still far from being unimportant. As for the explanation of this attitude of foreign Masons, I believe that the practice of exoteric rites, at least to a certain extent (for they are naturally very limited among Protestants), must probably contribute a great deal.

The absence of old documents in France is undoubtedly rather singular,

especially since it is not to be supposed that they were the object of a destruction like that which took place in England between 1717 and 1723, and to which some however escaped; but it must be said that we do not seem to be able to find more documents concerning the LL.°. which existed in France in the 1st half of the 18th century and even a little later (approximately until the foundation of the G.°. O.°.); I do not really know what it can hold ... On the other hand, if it was a Maç.°. introduced in France in 1688, it would not be so old, but it would nevertheless be significantly prior to 1717, which is essential for the question that concerns us. I also notice that, if this Maç.°. was "Scottish" would prove that this designation was not first applied to the high ranks as is commonly claimed. -- It is obvious that, if rites of different origin agree on certain points, this gives at least a strong presumption that these points must be considered as beyond dispute; I am not saying a certainty because, in spite of everything, there may have been subsequent "contaminations" between these rites.

The F.°. Mercier is quite right to attach great importance to the symbolism of numbers, and I think like you that there is every interest in introducing them as often as possible in the rituals as you envisage them. For the number of questions in the 3-degree instruction, the distribution is  $3 \times 33 + 1$  should be quite easy to achieve; it seems to me as to you that it is then very good to make the request for the sacred word the last question of the 3rd degree and to follow the answer with the "sign of horror". -- About the sacred word, I would like to ask you something: the verb meaning "to build" in Hebrew is *banah*, but, in the lexicon that I have at hand, I do not find the derived noun (which in all cas should not be very different from the Arabic *bannâ*, "builder"); could you not verify or have verified what the exact form is? Here is why: in the English form of the word, the first 2 syllables at least are correct, while they are not in the others; but the third seems to me still disfigured, and I would like to be able to realize what it is exactly...

As for the ritual itself, I fully approve, for the 1st degree, the arrangement bringing the number of responses to be made by the recipient to  $15 = 12 + 3$ , by completing this number as you indicate in your last letter. -- As for the number of things that "come in threes", we could indeed increase it to 33, but, of course, on the condition of not doing like Ragon, who, to enumerate as many as possible, has introduces ternaries which have not the least interest from the symbolic point of view, not to mention those which are purely fanciful or imaginary. For the latter, I mean above all those which are supposedly drawn from Eastern traditions: either the things mentioned are deformed to the point of being unrecognizable, or they even do not correspond to anything real: it must be said that, At that time we didn't know much about these traditions, and that they were too often supplemented by the imagination... -- I hope that, for the rituals of the 2nd and 3rd degree, you will also be able to find the means of introducing the other numbers there as you did for the number 3 in that of the 1st degree; we can also come back to it when the projects are more advanced; but I see that, for the 3rd at least, you think that it could be ready quite quickly; it's probably for the 2nd

that there is the most to do... I didn't know at all what you tell me about the 14 hills of San Francisco and the "Twin Peaks"; it's quite curious indeed. What it is also, from another point of view, is the insistence, which I must have pointed out somewhere, with which the founders of the United States introduced the number 13 wherever they could. !

A. Coen made on October 24 in Laval, in white dress, a conference on "the evolution of Christianity"; I would be quite curious to know how he could handle this subject...

Well frat.° to you.

RG

.....  
Cairo, December 26, 1948.

TÿCÿFÿ,

Yesterday I received your letter of December 14; but what happened for the previous one, and which I did not know when I spoke about it to F.° Maridort, is even more boring than a pure and simple loss: the abbreviated form of greeting having seemed incomprehensible, it was stopped by the censors, hence a request for explanations, and a disturbance for Mr. Lings (because address); for my part, I got off with sending the translation in full. This is something that could hardly have been foreseen in a country where Mac.° is by no means concealed and where it even has, as in England and for similar reasons, an almost "official" character; but obviously we cannot require all civil servants to be omniscient... So I would ask you, so that this does not risk happening again, to be careful not to put anything that could intrigue people unnecessarily and cause them much unjustified concern. The most annoying thing is that, although someone promised to resend this letter to me, I haven't got it yet, so much so that I wonder if it hasn't ended up getting lost in some office; I am going to try to have it claimed by a police officer of our friends. If in spite of that it was decidedly lost, I will tell you next time, since I see that fortunately you will be able to tell me again what it contained without too much trouble; I am at least happy to know that my two letters have reached you, because it would certainly have been much more difficult for me to reconstitute all that I had written to you...

Thank you for the "Arms of Death", which are really very curious and clearly suggest a hermetic symbolism; I was waiting for what you propose to tell me about the "Rooster Coat of Arms" to tell you more about it. -- Could you tell me which saint is depicted on the back? Despite the accompanying lion, I don't think it could be Saint Mark; I would rather think of Saint G r me, but I am far from being sure. What I find especially striking in this other engraving is the shape of the mountains, which, despite the great differences that naturally exist as to the "technique" of the drawing, recalls in a rather

strange certain Taoist landscapes.

For the Hebrew word meaning "builder" your delay is quite excusable and does not have any great inconvenience; I now understand why it is not found as a distinct word in the lexicon that I have, since it is in reality only a verbal form. I see by this that the English form of the word is much less denatured than the others, and it is so only in that the final has become mute there; this confirms what I thought, and, basically, it was only about the accuracy of the vowel O that I had doubts, because of the Arabic form which is different; ultimately, the entirely correct transcription of the whole would therefore be: "Mah ha-bônah".

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Of course, it is with great pleasure that I will answer, as far as I can, any questions you may have about my latest articles; there are indeed things to which I have made only incomplete allusions, not only because I could not dwell on them indefinitely, but also sometimes with intention, because, as you can imagine, I do not want imitate JB's way of doing it in his book; the reasons for which he claims to justify it do not convince me at all!

It is unfortunate that the F.<sup>o</sup>. Marty can't get his project ready as fast as he thought; one thing that surprises me is that Cerf, from what Maridort tells me, seems to believe that there will be difficulties in getting him adopted, which the way things turned out didn't seem to indicate. passed to the last Convent; hope these fears are in vain... Anyway, in order not to wait more or less long, I think your idea of sending your own project to our friends in Italy is excellent, since you now have several copies typewritten; I would therefore ask you to address it to F.<sup>o</sup>. Corrado Rocco, via Luca Giordano, 83, al Vomero, Napoli (it might be safer to recommend). After having read it, he will pass it to F.<sup>o</sup>. Giuseppe Palomba, professor at the University of Naples, who is a dignitary of the G.<sup>o</sup>. O.<sup>o</sup>. and who intends to present him to the authorities of Palazzo Ginstiniani in view of what he proposes to do; it is above all for this reason that the thing is rather urgent. Thank you in advance for that, as well as for the other copy which you announce me the sending and for the project of the 3<sup>o</sup> degree (I believe that it will be good to recommend it also, just as the report of the Convent when it appears). -- On this subject, another thing while I think about it: my old friend the F.<sup>o</sup>. Emmanuel Hillel writes to me that he would like to know about the project which will be submitted to the study of the LL.<sup>o</sup>. ; I don't know if we should send it to him "by right" in his quality of dignity of the L.<sup>o</sup>. Delphi (Or.<sup>o</sup>. of Alexandria), or if it will only be sent to the L.<sup>o</sup>. ; in the latter case, I hope that you will be able to send him a copy (when it is ready and printed, of course, because there is no urgency here), and, so as not to forget thereafter, here is his address now: "Ker Maranatha", Saint Jean Le Thomas (Manche).

I don't see anything else important to tell you for today; for the rest, you obviously have to wait until I have your previous letter one way or another.

Well frat.<sup>o</sup>. to you.

RG

Cairo, January 13, 1949

TŷCŷF,

I finally got your letter of November 9 about ten days ago; I also think that you will have already known it from the F.°. Maridort if you had the opportunity to see him in the meantime.

Clavelle did not speak to me of the two books cited by JB in any of the letters I received from him, and yet it does not seem that there is a lack of them; perhaps he forgot it; in any case, I asked him about it when answering the last one.

There is doubt about the exact place of the annual meeting of the Druids: it may be in the country of the Carnutes or on the borders of these, because of the double meaning of the Latin expression "in finibus" used by Caesar ; I also said something about it in my article on "La triple druidic enclosure" (June 1929). In any case, your remarks on the Bituriges and on Bordeaux are curious, and the one concerning York seems to me even clearer. On the other hand, as I pointed out in "The Land of the Sun" (January 1936), it should be noted that the Templars often chose for their establishments places where there are prehistoric vestiges, megalithic monuments or others; there is in all this the indication of a "continuity" which must go back very far... It is also curious that the ancients often brought together Druidism and Pythagoreanism; this kind of affinity which they noticed between the two might well have had something to do with a case like York's as well.

I don't quite know why I'm thinking at the moment of a bizarre thing, the reference to which I unfortunately cannot find, and which I am pointing out to you at least as a curiosity: someone, but I no longer remember who, noted that, in the documents of the Middle Ages concerning the construction of churches, there is repeated mention of workers who fell from the scaffolding while working on the vault, but who moreover were not injured in their fall ; and he found it strange that so many people fell from such heights without ever doing themselves any harm! I wonder if these alleged accidents might not have actually been a covert way of indicating something relating to an "air test"...

It is in the "Dances and legends" of Granet, volume 2, pp. 549-550, that is; moreover, finds a description of the "pas de YU I " it is not entirely clear, and suppose it must be the fault of the translation. -- I seem to remember that there is, in one of the works of Fr. to verify) an extra representing "an alchemist performing Yu's step".

It is curious, as you say, that we find the number 108 millimeters for the width of the bead expressed in the metric system; but it seems to me that the question that could be asked in this connection is rather that of the nature of the relations which exist between the said metric system and the old measures: why is the meter substantially equal to three feet (more exactly to three feet + one inch)? The definition of the meter is well known, but do we know how the length of the foot was originally determined and what it actually corresponded to? This is above all what should be sought, because I do not believe that those who established the

metric system may have had the idea of "arranging" the length of the meter in such a way as to make certain "coincidences" possible.

For the meaning of the movement of the officers, it is understood that this can only apply from the opening proclamation; it would be logical that, as you say, it should be the same for all members of the L.<sup>o</sup>. when they have to move although I have never seen any precise indication on this point. -- For the direction of travel at the 2nd degree, the comparison made by F.<sup>o</sup>. Mordvinoff is correct, but it seems to me that still doesn't fully resolve the issue.

Your idea about the "power of the name" is surely correct, and the reminder of the definition of the "duties" of officers could also be compared to the importance that Chinese Tradition gives to "correct denominations". -- For the officers called "by name", I now understand the meaning of your remark, and I think that you are also right on this point. -- It is certainly a mistake to put the surname before the first name; this is only a very modern and essentially profane usage (administrative papers, etc.), which I have always found all the more offensive since the word "first name" itself means precisely "before the name". -- On the other hand, it would obviously be more normal to call the recipient "Profane", rather than "Monsieur", which means nothing.

For the three orders of knighthood, I believe that it is necessary to stop at those which you have chosen, and also to put then in the formula "oldest and also honourable".

For the priority of night over day, there are, as you may have already seen, certain indications in "La Droite et la Gauche", but there would be still many others to note: thus, for the "days" of Genesis, the evening is named before the morning; also according to Islamic usage, it is sunset that marks the beginning of the day. -- The expression "high time" means noon; we also say "high twelve", and we say the same "low twelve" for midnight. reason of the work "from noon to midnight" it would only be necessary to wonder why this work is carried out in this way during the descending period (from the day or the year, it is the same thing from the symbolic point of view); but it seems to me that this question would not be impossible to resolve and perhaps you could think about it a little more; I will try to think about it on my side as well.

On a summoning board sent to me by Maridort, I saw that the imprint of the seal was indeed smaller than the one you yourself had sent me previously.

What you have found about JK's will is still only a hypothesis, and I cannot say how plausible it is, the case of being from the lodge (?) seeming quite different, first because of his conviction, and then because of JK's status as an outsider hopefully you can find something else when you return to the same library; I did not think that historians had taken so much care of this character, who, I must admit, was completely unknown to me before Clavelle spoke to me about him, or rather about his portrait by Dürer.

There is indeed a certain similarity between the orientation of the Nile and that of the Rhône,

although in the opposite direction (South-North and North-South), and also between the situation of Cairo and that of Arles in relation to the delta of these two rivers, something to which I had never paid attention; but as for the position of Salon in relation to the Rhone, I do not picture it clearly enough to be able to say anything about it.

About the secret name of Rome, I have seen several hypotheses, but which did not seem very conclusive to me: some have assumed that it was simply the reversal of "Roma", that is to say "Amor", which is perhaps just a bit too easy a fantasy; others have claimed that this name was that of Ops Consivia, who would have been, it seems, a tutelary deity of Rome, but of whom I know nothing more besides. Other suppositions must have been made, but I don't remember them, and in short no one knows what is really going on; this name must eventually have been lost, probably due to the extinction of the old priestly colleges following the establishment of Christianity. In any case, the reason why this name was kept secret (and it is probable that the case of Rome was not unique in this respect) is that enemies who managed to know it could have used it to seize the city, knowing the true name of a being (or of any "entity") somehow gives power over him, because this name is identified with his very essence, of which it is the ultimate expression. more adequate.

The comparison between comedy among the ancient Greeks and the "carnival celebrations" seems to me quite justified; it would however be necessary, to be more affirmative, to have other precise details on the origin of the comedy and on the circumstances where it was played first of all; it must not be impossible to find, but I don't have anything here on the subject; the very name of the comedy indicates that it must have been in connection with a feast, but this is not a sufficient indication.

For the closure of the third degree, I find like you that a "found word" and a "substituted sign" do not go very well together, but I do not see what we could do for The page marked 7 is missing at the bottom of the manuscript

some very curious data, and I intend to write something on

this subject; what I was quite amazed about is that there is mention of the ratio of the digits of the number 345 to the sides of the right triangle, which we talked about some time ago. -- This makes me think of yet another thing (it is about God and iod bringing together that JB finds it good to reproach me as if I were responsible for it): the three letters of the word God were formerly taken as representing the initials of the three Hebrew words "Gomer, Oz, Dabar" (Beauty, Strength, Wisdom); I found it at least written that way, but Gomer, with this meaning, seems surprising to me, and it seems to me, by similarity with Arabic, that it should rather be Gomel; unfortunately, I could not find any indication which allows me to be sure of one or the other; would it be possible for you to check or have it checked? Thanks in advance for this information.

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Well frat.°. to you.

RG

Cairo, January 23, 1949.

TŷCŷFŷ,

I received at the same time, only three days ago, your two letters of December 29 and January 6. "You must not excuse yourself so much for what has happened, for these are things which it is hardly possible to foresee; Besides, it was more boring than really serious, and, as you will see from my last letter, everything is finally back to normal!

I am glad to know that you were interested in Reghini's book on Numbers, and in this connection, apart from the question of what can be drawn from it for the second degree (this was above all the reason for which I thought it would be useful for you to take note of), I would like to ask you if you could not make a review of it for the journal, because I have not yet been able to take care of it myself so far, and I have so many books behind that I'm afraid it will never be possible for me to get to everything...

For the T.°. B.°. of the third degree, I must say that, if I knew of the existence of the English table, I have never seen the drawing of a French table for this grade, and that, moreover, Vuillaume expressly gives (Pl., 2. 4) the figure of the coffin with the mention "Trace of the Lodge of Master; this is what explains what I had written to you on this subject. Now, according to what you tell me, I see that you have found a painting in other manuals, which I probably don't have; but then another question arises: what should be, under these conditions, the respective places of the picture and the coffin? It seems to me that a possible solution would be this: ci: the coffin is placed on the painting itself, so that the painting only appears when the coffin is removed; what do you think? Otherwise, it would be necessary to assume two separate apartments for the reception, which, I believe, does exist in some rituals; and, on the other hand, the coffin has no reason to be in third degree attires which do not involve reception, so that then, there was no painting, the central location would remain empty. -- Going back to the English table, if you could not read the inscription, it may be because you did not take into account the fact that the English alphabet differs from the French alphabet in what it counts as distinct letters j, k, v, w; the distinction between i and j, u and v, seems to give it a less archaic character.

For the position of the three lights in relation to that of the principal Officers, I believe that the clearest thing is to draw the figure opposite, where we see that the arrow going from each light to the corresponding board is well directed in the direction of the walk of the sun. One could say that thus each light, or the influence which it represents, is received in some way like a solar ray by the Officer to whose function it corresponds. --

For the four cardinal virtues, I do not remember if there was a very precise intention in the note of the translation of "Philosophurenena...", apart from the idea that the moral point of view constitutes only a particular application, and that it is always necessary to carry out a transposition to arrive at a meaning of a more principled order; as to a relationship with the four Aristotelian causes, it is not

impossible, but I had never thought of it and I don't really see how it could be established term by term; do you have any idea about it yourself? In any case, the glans appearing in LL.<sup>o</sup>. English to symbolize the four cardinal virtues would somehow complete the three lights insofar as these can be related to the three theological virtues.

For the double door, this seems to me, basically, to be required above all for a reason of symmetry, in accordance with the position of the two columns on each side of this door; if it has only one leaf, one could quite logically be led to imagine that it should not open on the same side depending on whether one is working in the first degree or in the second degree!

I suppose your letter written from Riom must be the one that has been held back so long, but yet there is nothing in it about the times of Christ's birth and death; for the first, the correspondence between midnight and the winter solstice is obvious; but, for the second, three o'clock after noon cannot have any connection with the date of Easter closely following the vernal equinox, for the hour which corresponds to this would be six o'clock in the morning; but I don't know if that's what the question is about, which you think you asked and which you probably forgot, because I don't think there's another letter from you that got lost. -- I don't know anything about Nonnos' "Dionysiaks" either, other than the portion which was translated by Mario Meunier, but I also have the impression that there must be some very interesting things in there. from a symbolic point of view. -- Your remark about the letters of B and J, as initials of place names, is certainly curious, but I wonder what consequences one could draw from it exactly; in this regard, you may also know that in the rank of knight of the east, these same letters are taken to mean Judah and Benjamin. -- In the article on the Archaeometer of which you speak, it is not an iod, but a lamed which is indicated as described by the walk of the Master, which is quite different and seems to me moreover correct ; I don't see what the Z could mean in this case. In fact, the Z appears in the fourth degree, where it is given as the initial of a Hebrew name, but I don't know who speculated that, in reality, it would rather be the Greek  $\gamma\gamma\gamma$  ... "Life". One must also be wary of the distortions of the Hebrew letters which have sometimes occurred, with the result of replacing them with Latin letters with which they have no relation, as in the case where a iod was changed to S, whereas the two letters have an entirely opposite meaning, the first representing unity and the second multiplicity!

I don't believe there is an "order of Za-Ga-Zig" that would be a separate organization, only that "Za-Ga-Zig Temple" belongs to the "Ancient big Order of the Noires of the Mystics rite ", (?) The rite has the particularity of being reserved for Third Degree Masons (they are extraordinarily numerous in the United States); I seem to remember that President Harding was a member of this "Za Ga-Zig Temple". In reality, Zagazig, or more correctly Ez-Zaqaziq, is the name of a city in Egypt; as for writing it by separating the syllables, it goes without saying that it is pure fantasy!

The "King Salomon's Temple Lodge" was founded, I believe, on the initiative of the historian RF Gould, but, despite this, I do not think it was ever

properly considered a "Lodge of Research"; it is moreover possible that its foundation is a little later than the publication of the book of the Rev. Lawrence. There was an article about it at the time in the London Freemason, but, though I must surely have it somewhere, I am quite unable to find it now; there are many things that the lack of space prevents me from storing in a sufficiently accessible way...

IC's "inventions" may be harmless on their own, but this excess of imagination is still a bit boring; despite this, we must pass over many things thinking that, without him, the realization of the "Great Triad" would undoubtedly not have been possible, and this is a consideration that deserves to be taken into account. .

The fact of simultaneously belonging to several obediences certainly has nothing abnormal in itself, but, in the special case of which you speak, I do not see that the G.° L.° National, because of its relationship with the G.° L.° of England, can admit that one of its members continues at the same time to belong to an obedience not recognized by this one, because the English masons are very strict in this respect; I also ask the question to F.° Peilon, from whom I have just received a letter, and who will perhaps be able to tell us more surely what the

situation is in fact Maridort sent me a letter from F.° Mercier, in which he tells me about what you say and some other questions; I suppose that when he spoke to you about this, he had not yet decided to write to me directly. I haven't had time to answer him yet, but of course I will soon; you can ask him to communicate to you what I will tell him on this subject, this in order to avoid me rewriting the same things twice. According to what he says, it seems that the adoption of the French rite by "Akademos" has already been definitively decided; this is perhaps better in a sense, because, since the constitution of the Grand Priory of Gaul, the G.° O.° must no longer be recognized as being in regular possession of the Rectified Regime; I also think that this is one of the reasons why the attempt made by Gloton in Switzerland could not succeed, even if he had addressed himself, not to the G.° L.° Alpina as he did, but at the Grand Priory of Helvetia that this concerns exclusively in reality. -- About the Strict Observance, against which there was perhaps a little too much prejudice among many, do you know if the text of the patent of Baron de Hund (whose name is rather curious indeed) has ever been deciphered? I have this text, but I have never had the time nor the patience which would be necessary to try to understand something in it; I don't even know exactly in what language it is written, Latin or German, although Latin seems more likely to me.

What you say about modern Christianity is surely very correct; but, as for what was written in the newspapers on the occasion of the last Christmas party, I must confess that I have no idea what it is about...

For the passages of the Gospel which you quote concerning Peter, the interpretation is surely not easy, and I am not sure how far the application can be extended, although, in principle at least, one can always say that Peter represents exotericism; as to the appellation "son of Jonas" thus employed

exceptionally, it must respond to some particular intention, but what is not clear is the relationship that may exist between the very meaning of these passages and the symbolism of the whale.

Coming to Dürer, I wonder if, in the "Armoiries au Coq", the strange shape of the lion's tail does not hide some numerical symbolism, but I would be unable to justify this idea in any way. imprecise; as for the inclined position of the shield, I believe that it is very frequent in German heraldic figurations. -- The shape of the tendril of a vine coiled around the lamp of "Saint Jerome in his cell" also seems to have some connection with that of the tail of the lion; it is often in these seemingly insignificant details that many things are hidden, but it is not always easy to find the key!.

-- For "The Knight, Death and the Devil", I saw a reproduction of it once, but I don't remember the details; I therefore accept your offer to send it to me, and I thank you in advance. In the number of "Etudes Carmélitaines" on Satan, we gave only a fragment, the figure of the Devil, which looks very much like that of a pig, with also something of the goat and perhaps the donkey.

What you tell me of the reasons for fearing that the draft ritual will not be adopted seems indeed somewhat disturbing; but it seems to me that the main thing would be to be able to admit it "officially" by the Coven, even if, afterwards, it cannot be overemphasized that it should be observed by all LLÿ. in a perfectly uniform way. -- Your idea of giving more importance to "verbal" forms than to "plastic" forms is certainly in line with current needs and could eliminate many difficulties; but how to carry it out exactly without altering in any way the specific character of a ritual of "builders"? -- For the formula used now in "Cheops", the assumption that you make on the way in which JB became aware of it is indeed very probable.

Thanks for sending ahead; you would be kind enough to also thank Marty for coming up with this idea for the typed copy.

I think you won't forget to talk to me again next time about what you say about initiatory consecration and your reflections on the mode of action of rites.

I thank you for your good wishes, and I send you all mine in my turn, only regretting that they cannot reach you until a little late; the last time I wrote to you, I was preoccupied with answering so many things that it made me forget that we were at the beginning of the year!

Well Frat.º. to you.

RG

.....

Cairo, March 12, 1949.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

Five or six days ago I received your letter of February 24 with the ritual of the third degree; this reassured me, because, not thinking that you had to do everything

this work, which indeed sufficiently explains your delay, I began to fear that something had still gone astray. You refer to my letter of January 23rd, but I believe I understand that you must have also received that of the 13th, since it was in this that I replied to yours of December 29th.

I haven't received the copy of the first degree ritual yet, but that's no wonder; I knew some time ago that the one you had sent to F.°.

Rocco had reached him, and I think he must have written to you since then.

-- Thanks in advance for sending this copy and for the other things you mention; Maridort will no doubt send me Dürer's engraving soon, if he hasn't already done so.

I believe that you can get away with the account of Reghini's book very well and that you are really wrong to mistrust yourself in this way. -- As for the article in "Gabaon", there are surely many interesting things to say; I don't believe much was ever written about it, or at least I don't know of it, and outside of Ragon I have no idea what you might find. I see in the ritual that you translate this word as "hill", which in short is correct, but it is more precisely a hill of rounded shape, because it is the idea of "roundness" which is expressed by its root, as I recently wrote to Maridort who had also asked me a question on this subject and who, not knowing the exact Hebrew spelling, had made connections with other completely different roots. -- There seems to me no doubt that the main reason for the choice of this name is the manifestation of God to Solomon "in this place (2 Kings, 3 -- 2 Chron., 1), especially since it has a direct aspect with the project of the construction of the Temple, and no doubt you would do well to mention it in the ritual, or rather to recall it when this name is given to the new Master, I realize, while rereading the ritual, that it is already indicated at the beginning of the legend of Hiram: possibly, the text of Joshua that you quote is also added to it. -- I have just reviewed the book of Vuillaume: it does not mention the name of Gibeon than in the French rite, I don't know why, and he speaks of the role of the Gibeonites as guardians and preservers of the Ark of the Covenant (Cf. 1 Chron., 21) (which indeed is yet another reason to be added to the previous ones); this is the only explanation he gives, and, as regards the meaning, he translates as "habitaculum exesum" by means of a decomposition into two words which is entirely fanciful.

A point that I would like to point out to you, although it is of relatively little importance, is this: in France, we are used to saying Hiram-Abi, and there is no doubt that has retain this form; but in England they say Hiram-Abif, which has puzzled many people. Here is the explanation: Abi evidently means "my father"; as for Abif, it is a deformation of Abin, "his father"; both expressions are found in the Bible, and in either case the possessive pronoun refers to Hiram, king of Tyre, who, it seems, gave to the other Hiram this name "Father", as a mark of respect, because it goes without saying that he was not his son in the proper sense of the word. -- On the other hand I do not believe that the name of Hiram's father can be Aor (light) as you wrote; I have always seen it given as Har or Hor, which is usually interpreted as "fire", which is perhaps not strictly exact, but which in any case expresses the idea of "heat", which

seems here to have a fairly direct relationship with metalworking. As for the very name of Hiram, it is rather curious that it appears with several variants: in certain biblical passages, in fact, we find the forms Hûram and Hirom; I don't know exactly what we could get out of it...

As for the ritual itself, I find it very good as a whole, and I see hardly any observations to make, except, however, on one important point: it is about the instruments of Hiram's murder, because there are several different versions regarding the first two; I don't know exactly where you got the one you adopted, but I don't think it's the most correct one. In my opinion at least, it must be like this in reality: First, 24-inch ruler (throat blow); second square (blow to the heart); third, mallet (blow to the head). In this way, the progression follows that of the divisions of time: First, 24-hour day; second, season (quarter of the year; third, annual cycle (because of the cylindrical shape of the mallet). This temporal symbolism is far from negligible here, especially if we make a connection in this respect with the formula of the "Shatapatha Brâhmana" according to which "Prajâpati is the Year", at least in a certain respect, which also has its correspondence in the number of bricks used for the construction of the Vedic altar; you will perhaps remember, in this regard, that I spoke of the close relationship existing between the sacrifice of Prajâpati (or Purusha) and the murder of Hiram and Osiris in my article "Gathering together what is scattered" (October issue -November 1946). -- It should be noted that the 24-inch ruler constitutes something of an "anomaly", most probably intended, since normally denal divisions are suitable for rectilinear measurements, while duodenal divisions apply to circular measurements. I remember that, in the "Speculative Mason", someone asked a rather naive question: "What happened to the 24-inch ruler in the Maç.º. French since the adoption of the metric system? "

The truth is that this measurement has never changed and does not have to change, any more than the four inches for the width of cord of which we have already spoken... --- I had formerly made at Thebah a exposition on the symbolism of the legend of Hiram; it seems to me that I must have kept some notes, but I am completely unable to find them now; in any case, if I think of something else, I will tell you next time, but it is above all on this question of tools serving as weapons in the third degree, that it seems to me necessary to bring your attention.

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

.....

Cairo, April 30, 1949.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

It has been some time since I received your letter of March 31-April 10; I think the F.º. Maridort will have already let you know as I had asked her, because I foresaw that it would not be possible for me to answer it quite immediately.

suite, being obliged to finish first with an article for the "Cahiers du Sud" which I had been insistently asked for for a long time. -- Thank you for all the things attached to this letter; I was a little worried about the initiation ritual which in the previous one you said you sent to me separately by regular post, but since I found it with this one, I think so it doesn't. nothing is missing.

About Gab.<sup>o</sup>. (whose Hebrew pronunciation is actually Gibe'on), the exact translation is indeed, as you say, "round hill" or "rounded eminence"; this form is indeed frequent (although not absolutely constant) for the representations of the "sacred mountain", and it is also that of the tumuli, which, moreover, can be considered as images of this same mountain. The rounded shape at the top symbolically relates to the human skull and the crown of the head; I think I alluded to it in an article, but I don't remember which one. -- The number is indeed 131; I do not see at this moment what other words have the same number in Hebrew, although of course there may be. I wonder if what he reminded Clavelle might not simply be the story concerning the numbers 1331 and 313 which is found in the rather fanciful pamphlet by GR Dell'Acqua, which I reviewed in the issue of September 1948. -- As for the relationship with the idea of "vengeance", it does not seem entirely clear to me, despite the passages of "2" Samuel that you indicate and that I have just reread; apart from that, your interpretation of vengeance is surely correct, but I do not believe that one can say that all the grades which follow the third are, without distinction, grades of vengeance; usually, this character is attributed in a more special way to the ranks of Chosen. As for the connection between verses 2, 23, and 20, 12, and what I quoted on page 4 of the "King of the World", there is surely something curious there indeed, but, for the moment at least, I cannot quite see how one could justify it... --- The Ming character constituted by the sun and the moon means "light"; the other Ming words signifying "name", "mandate", "destiny", being written by completely different characters; but it is no less true that, between homophones like these, there is often a certain relation of meaning (on these Ming words, see "

The Great

Triad", (pages 116 and 122). As for the character appearing on Chinese sacrificial aprons, I could not say anything, having never seen a reproduction; but it seems to me at least very likely that it must be i, the unit, in relation to the Pole Star, which would be associated there with the 7 stars of the Big Dipper; it could however also be the word Yi, meaning cyclic mutation, as in the title of the Yi -King.--The Greeks equated the Tyrian Melkart with Herakles, but the connection between the names themselves seems to me very doubtful; many fanciful interpretations have been given of the name Heracles (including the "Hara-Kâla" de Jacolliot), and that of Fabre d'Olivet, without being absolutely impossible, is in any case very hypothetical. On the other hand, his explanation of the name of Melkart is certainly faulty: it is not Melck-Aretz, King of the Earth, but a contraction of Melek-Earth, King of the City.

The f.<sup>o</sup>. Rocco wrote to me that he had indeed received everything you had sent him, and that he had been prevented by the flu from answering you immediately as he would have liked; but I see that his letter did not take very long to reach you. As for

the solution he envisaged, moreover without much hope, for the attachment of the L. °. projected, I had spoken about it immediately to Maridort, and, information taken, the thing is indeed impossible for the reason which you think, and it will be it as long as there will be official relations between G. °. L. °. of France and the G. °. O. °. from Italy (whose situation, moreover, is currently more confused than ever, because of the competitions that have arisen following the death of G. °. M. °. Guido Laj); I informed Rocco of this negative response, which I had foreseen, and he told me that he was not at all surprised by it either.

For the instruments of Hiram's murder, I see from what you tell me about the "Emulation" ritual that there are many variations, but the more I think about it, the more it seems to me that it is decidedly the version that I have indicated to you which is the most correct. The "Pliers", where it is used, is surely a lever, the shape of which does not in fact lend itself to any comparison with that of the compass. As for the expression according to which the Master asks to be tried by the square and the compass, there is no doubt that this is something quite different and that it relates to the symbolism that I have exhibited in "The Great Triad" (including the figuration which was given there more especially by the form of ancient Chinese ritual garments). - - The objection to which the blow given on the shoulder gives rise, is that it would not be in direct correspondence with any of the subtle centers of the human being, contrary to what takes place for the others. As for the blow to the head, it seems to me that it must more precisely be carried to the forehead, and not to the top of the head, because the consideration of the latter must really intervene only at the rank of Royal Arch, because of the "extra individual" character of the corresponding centre. Incidentally, the blow to the forehead makes me think of the rite (today fallen into disuse, it seems) which consisted in striking with a silver hammer the forehead of the Pope who had just died; but these two rites are in a sort of inverse relationship, because here it was a question of a last effort of "revivification"; here again we find the double power of the vajra or of the instruments which symbolize it. -- After sending off my last letter, I realized that I must have explained myself insufficiently about the 24-inch rule: in reality, 24 inches equals two feet, and it is obvious that, if we say 24 inches, it is to mark in an explicit way the allusion to the division of the day into 24 hours. On the other hand, what really has something abnormal about it is the very fact of the division of the foot, as a rectilinear measure, into 12 inches and not into 10; we would have to know where it could have come from, and, as I have already pointed out to you on another subject (4 inches = 108 millimeters), the question of the origin of the old length measurements raises a certain number of enigmas which do not seem the easiest to solve... The day being in reality a cycle, there is nothing abnormal in its duodenal division, but only in its representation by the length of a rule, made possible by the application to it of an equally duodenal division. In China, the length of the foot has varied at various times, correlatively with that of the "man's measure" (the height of the mast of the royal chariot), but it has always been correctly divided into 10 inches and not 12.

I carefully re-read your "definitive" project for the first degree initiation ritual, and this time I found no further observations to make, even with regard to

just about the shape. Similarly, for the statement, arranging it to have a total of 33 requests looks fine to me that way, and I really don't see any changes to suggest.

I am completely amazed by what you are telling me about the project which has been sent to the study of LL.°, and which, contrary to what you thought, I have not yet seen until here ; as soon as I received your letter, I spoke to Maridort about it, and I hope that you or he will be able to send it to me. For what reasons was Marty able to act in this way, without showing anyone the last wording of this draft, and how was he able to introduce or allow so many errors to remain in it, both in terms of content and for form ? This is extremely boring in every way, and, as you say, one wonders what will become of it at the next Coven; I understand your annoyance only too well, after all the trouble you have taken to manage to do something decent. I thank you for all the explanations you give me on this subject; it is indeed good that I know exactly what all this is about, but it is also of course understood that, even if I had first had knowledge of the text in question, it could never have been come to the idea that you had something to do with this sort of "defect". I also understand that you must have already been surprised when you noticed that the remarks in my letter of July 31 related almost all to modifications made by Marty and that you were unaware of until then...

I now come to the question of the ritual currently in use at the GT; but, above all, I want to tell you that I was very happy with your clarification of the thoughts you made to Mercier, because the way in which he had reported them had caused Clavelle serious concern. and to Maridort, and consequently to myself when they told me about it. It is certainly necessary that you, like them, do everything possible to remain at the GT, and it is to be hoped that, in spite of the threats of which you speak, you will never be obliged to leave it against your will; moreover, in spite of the imperfect or even unpleasant things that may still exist there, I believe that it would be impossible to find better elsewhere, and then we must also think of the results that this may give subsequently, because it goes without saying that it is only gradually that one will be able to arrive at something more completely satisfactory, on the condition of not allowing oneself to be discouraged in the meantime... -- As for the ritual in question, there is surely there, after all that you explain to me, something that is still quite disturbing for several reasons, and in the first place because the way in which its origin has been presented constitutes an obvious mystification; even if one cannot discover the motives and the precise intention, this observation is enough for there to be cause for serious suspicion. It is quite clear that, as you say, there is nothing English about this ritual, or at least I see no such thing as a point of detail: the answer to the question concerning the Master's clothing, and again it is inaccurately translated, because it is actually "Yellow jacket and blue trousers" (compass allusion). On the other hand, I notice some things that are not very correct: the correspondence with the elements is inverted for the 2nd and 3rd trips; transport noises from 1° to 3° are not justified either; the trailing chain, in place of the rope, hardly responds to the symbolism of the "cable-tow", and that alone would almost suffice to show that it cannot

to be an English ritual. As for the questions which have been taken from the catechism of Appÿ Elu Coën, and which are moreover completely out of place in the ritual of a symbolic degree, it is obvious that this observation is decisive; if you hadn't had the opportunity to find the source of it in this way, I might not have thought of looking for it where it is (because I must say that it has been a long time since I haven't looked at this book by Papus), but I would have noticed at least at first sight that certain characteristic expressions, such as in particular that of "Great Universal Temple", could only come from a borrowing from the Elus Coëns; and what to say, when it is a question of a symbolic Lÿ, of the substitution of the form of the equilateral triangle for that of the long square? I believe like you that there are unfortunately many chances that JB is the real author of this ritual, and it is certain that that is not reassuring either, especially given what we know of the kind of "operations" he is used to. Wouldn't there be any way to get this ritual replaced by a more normal one, for example by giving to JC (but of course I don't mean that you would have to do it, and I believe that it would be better to leave this task to someone who is on better terms with him) the proof of the mystification which is at its origin and which he very probably does not suspect?

#### Opening It

would be more normal to always say East, West and South, and not East West and South; it is obviously the same thing, but there is an old habit here which it seems preferable to keep.

Whether the Venÿ should be uncovered is debatable; according to some, on the contrary, he must always remain covered, because he is supposed to work always at the rank of Master.

In the opening formula, it should be: "in the constituted Rÿ Lÿ of Saint John", etc. \_\_\_\_\_

"The building of our edifice" is not very happy; why not put "from our Temple"?

Questions to visitors. -- In the answer to the 2nd question, I always saw dungeons; why was the word tombs substituted for this word? -- the complete answer to the third question is:

"Submission to Venÿ. greetings, prosperity and welcome to all FFÿ

"--The rest of the questions are missing; I suppose that must be an oversight.  
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#### Initiation

Page 4, it is necessary "the tiring fight against the passions".

On page 5, it seems that "To put a salutary curb on our passions" and to teach us to calm the ardor of our passions" are somewhat redundant; one of the two would probably be sufficient.

1st trip. --"From East to West" must be a mistake, and it seems that it must be the opposite. -- The three trips are not made here in the same direction, and even there is only the 2° which is in the "solar" direction; it is true that there are many differences in this respect, but the reasons for this are not very clear, and this

point might need to be examined more closely.

The "foley discs" are really a bit too modern; Why not simply keep the accessories that were in use in the past?

3rd trip. -- We do not really understand how it is possible to bring the recipient back "through the middle of the Lÿ", since this middle is occupied by the painting on which we must never step; moreover, the circumambulation would not be complete in this case.

Page 11, an inadvertence to be corrected: "characteristics known only to true Maçÿ ones" (and not only known).

Page 12, the mention of the square and the sword on the Holy Book must be inaccurate; it must always in reality be covered with the compass and the square, laid out in the way which characterizes the grade at which one is working.

Page 14, the formula of the consecration should be written in a manner exactly conforming to that of the opening: "In the name of the Gÿ Aÿ of the Uÿ", etc. ; and do not forget to restore there also "the Rÿ Lÿ of Saint Jean".

In the formula of the oath, I believe that it is decidedly best to keep the "vultures", because the English expression, which has a more general meaning, would not bear a literal translation quite badly: "the voracious (or devouring) birds of the 'air' does not seem to me to have a very good effect in French.

For the questions at the end, I already spoke to you earlier about what relates to the meanings given to the letter G. On the other hand, it is quite curious that one of the pillars built by Enoch was later found by Hermes, since he is most often identified with Enoch himself; but it must be said that confusions of this kind are far from being rare in the old versions of the legendary history of Maçÿ; if you have found that one in some document relating to such a source, there is therefore only to maintain the thing as it is, the general remark on the anachronistic nature of some of these questions being sufficient moreover to dismiss in advance any objection in this regard.

You wrote Athelstone; I seem to have always seen Athelstan, which must be the true spelling of that name.

One thing I'm thinking of incidentally: formerly, the 2nd degree was often referred to as "Expert"; although it is certainly not very important, I wonder if one could not find a way to recall it somewhere in the ritual; What do you think ?

I can't find anything else to report to you and I hope that nothing serious has escaped me. There's only exactly one week to go from here to the Coven, and that's why I've been in a bit of a hurry to examine all this; I hope that my letter will still have time to reach you before that date!

Well fratÿ. to you,

RG

.....

Cairo, May 14, 1949.

TyCyFy,

I received your letter of April 17 shortly after having answered the previous one; but, since then, the preparation of my articles for the June issue has obliged me to adjourn my correspondence, which will explain my delay in writing to you again. -- Of course, you can always write to me whenever you have to talk to me about one question or another; I will only ask you, once and for all, to excuse me if it sometimes happens that I cannot answer you immediately.

Thank you for your additional explanations about the rituals you sent me; I still haven't received Marty's project. -- I haven't had any news from Saint Jean-Le-Thomas for quite a long time, which is even beginning to worry me; so I can't tell you what Marty has done there, and it's best to wait until further notice.

I hope, from what you tell me, to receive your review of Reghini's book soon; you can count on me to tell you frankly what I think of it.

I had never heard of that book by Claudel that you saw recently; who is Abbé Tardif de Moidrey?

The German princes who supported or pushed Luther are generally considered, I believe, as having had only political aims in this, and that was in any case the opinion of Canon Paquier, of whom I spoke to you the last time; but certainly it may very well be that this explanation is insufficient and that there was something else, in some at least. It may even be that the reform was in fact brought about for "cyclical" reasons and, as you say, the "quality" of the instruments employed does not always matter much in such cases.

What it would be good to know is whether the affirmation of "free examination was clearly posed from the start, because that is what opened the door to all individualistic deviations; your remark on the subject of the "ternary aspect" and its applications is certainly interesting; however, it seems difficult that Protestantism, which has no real unity (this is precisely a consequence of "free examination"), even apart from any other consideration, put on the same footing as the Catholic and Orthodox churches to complete the ternary in Christianity; as for the correspondence of the three branches with the apostles Peter, John and Paul, I really do not know what you have to think about it... -- Be that as it may, the passages of "Protestant Positions" that you quote to me are quite remarkable indeed and surprise me just as much as you; it would seem that there is currently something of a change in the mentality of certain Protestant circles, especially perhaps those where one is preoccupied with the question of the union of the churches; but to what extent could this change be interpreted as a return to the original spirit of the Reformation, or at least as approaching it?

Regarding Albert of Brandenburg, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order is certainly better known than his namesake and contemporary, but I cannot tell you with which of the two Dürers he was in contact; maybe you were able

already check what it is. -- I never knew on what occasion Luther's Rosicrucian (or apparently such) symbol first appeared; this symbol has a rather particular aspect: the cross is placed on a heart, and this one in turn on a rose; it seems that it would have been properly the seal of the "Militia Crucifera Evangelica", but the difficulty is to know if this one (which one claimed to revive in America) really had links with Rosicrucianism.

I know the portrait of Jean Klégerger, but, on the other hand, I did not know at all those of Dürer himself, of 1499 and 1500, of which you speak. In the first, what seems the most curious, and also the most enigmatic, are the three rings; it would seem to somehow represent the meeting of three cycles, but what cycles can it be? The interpretation you are considering is certainly not implausible, but should it be applied here to the interior of Christianity only, or to a broader domain comprising several traditional forms? One could even also wonder if it would not rather be a question of the meeting of three different initiations, and it would undoubtedly be necessary to be able to make connections with other indices to be able to specify more... As for the other portrait, what seems to me somewhat surprising is that Dürer gives himself the epithet of "Noricus" there, as elsewhere in Kléberger, because, if this epithet must have had a hidden meaning, I do not believe that this could have been applied at the same time to two distinct characters; must we therefore think that, for one of them (who would then probably be Dürer), it should be taken only in its literal and geographical sense, while, for the other, it would be otherwise?

-- Clavelle, in his last letter, tells me that he asked Fy Granger, of Lyons, to do research in the library of his city to see if there would not be something there concerning Klégerger; this one was surely a very mysterious character, and it would seem that he played a sort of role of "hyphen" between different initiatory organizations, among which those to which Dürer belonged. I could not affirm that it is to him that Landolfo's letter quoted by Reghini refers, but it seems to me at least quite probable, because it is not clear to whom else it could apply as well.

Good fratry to you.

RG

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Cairo, June 10, 1949.

Ty Cÿ Fy,

Yesterday I received your letter of May 30; I had already learned from Clavelle that you had received the first of my two letters, and I see that the second did not take long to reach you after that.

I had in fact spoken to Clavelle about the question of the review of JB's book, and I thank you for agreeing to take charge of it, because it seems to me necessary to do one, for the very reason that makes you find it more urgent than

that of the "Numeri Sacri", in which you are surely right. Hopefully it won't take you too long, and also that you'll soon be able to pick up the books you're waiting for to finish your article on Gabÿ, which Clavelle, according to what he told me in one of his last letters, seems eager to have without too much delay. You should not be so surprised at his insistence on asking for your collaboration, for, like him, I am convinced that you will be able to give interesting things; and I assure you that, once you know how to write correctly, the rest of the "school education" really doesn't matter much in this respect!

Don't worry about what Clavelle told me about the Fÿ Mercier; he doubtless exaggerated the significance of some of the reflections you had made to him, and I even have the impression that the anxiety he felt about it still persists a little in him; but on the whole this very concern is rather a favorable sign as far as he is concerned, because it testifies to the interest he takes in the work of the GT

Thank you for the correction concerning the portrait with the three rings; I don't know any more than you who Hans Tucher could be, and I had never even seen that name until now; but then it would seem, if the three rings actually relate to this personage as is likely, that he too must have played some role in the initiatory organizations of his time. -- According to what Clavelle told me, he has not yet been able to determine what exactly is the function that the word "Noricus" would designate; so I don't know how certain it is that it can only be filled by one character at a time, and it may just be a guess at the moment. The Fÿ Granger must seek in the library of Lyon if there is information concerning Kl  berger there; maybe he'll find something interesting there. As for the relations with the Waldensians and Calvinism to which you allude, I have no idea what it may be, and I hope that you will be able to talk to me about it later.

With regard to Protestantism, your remark on the almost complete abandonment of rites is certainly quite correct, and, even putting aside any question of doctrine, this is obviously a most serious lacuna and which clearly shows that some essential thing has been lost as far as the doctrine is concerned, I hope you can find more details on the question of "free examination", because it goes without saying that, from the traditional point of view, it has much more importance only of more or less subtle theological nuances which may have been accentuated only after the event, as a consequence rather than as a cause of the split.

As for the non-initiatory character of Christian rites, at least in their current state, the remarks you have shared with me are indeed of a nature to further confirm what Clavelle and I think of it, and even tend to indicate that it must have been to be so very early, although, as regards the very origin, the question still remains very obscure. It seems to me that the term used by the Byzantine Church must have the double meaning of "initiation" and "consecration" (the latter can also be of an exoteric order), as is also the case in Sanskrit for the word "d  ksh  ", which must be translated by one or the other according to the cases to which it is applied. -- Maintaining the word "Amen" in its original Hebrew form (which incidentally is common to both the Christian and Islamic traditions) is surely far from unimportant, but I do not believe, however, that it can be regarded as

compensating for the absence of a traditional language; this constitutes a particularity which surely cannot be without reason, but, whatever one may think of it, it must in any case be recognized that it is far from facilitating the study of the deep meaning of the Christian tradition...

I knew nothing of Abbé Tardif de Moidrey or of his relations with Léon Bloy, and I must say that I never knew anything specific about the story of AM Roullé either, which seems really quite strange; moreover, in everything relating to La Salette, there is always a somewhat disturbing side. As for the case of Léon Bloy himself, it goes without saying that it is above all his "suite" which greatly increases its interest; the "authority" that we tend to attribute to it, as you say, is due in large part to the influence of the Maritain group. Were you present when Cerf expressed his excessive admiration for Maritain? The proposal which was made to enter into a relationship with him, and which was the occasion, seems to me particularly suspicious, because of the hostility, as fierce as it is underhanded, which he has always shown towards me. .

I'm amazed at what you tell me about Cerf's "inventions"; despite everything I already knew, I wouldn't have believed it could go that far! The most unfortunate thing about this story is that nothing that had been promised to Clavelle was followed up, and that makes me understand even better the disappointment he must have felt when he saw that everything was going downhill. finally to the occupation he currently has... I must admit, on the other hand, that I cannot guess who is the person that Cerf brought in like this in the sandstone of his imagination, because I did not never heard of any project for a dictionary of Sanskrit terms found in my work; This is something entirely new to me, and even unexpected.

You speak of a "History of the Dukes of Burgundy", but I cannot remember nothing about it; could you tell me or remind me who is the author?

Yours fratÿ,

RG

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Cairo, September 8, 1949

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

I have many excuses to make for being so late with you this time; I received your three letters successively in due time, the first of which dates back to the thirtieth of June! But, since all this time, I always had things which, in one way or another, prevented me from writing to you; it must also be said that, after your first letter, I had first of all expected your article, of which you announced the next dispatch; moreover, I was not surprised that he was a little late, having learned from Maridort that you were then on vacation; but it is especially since it reached me that time has completely failed me, and I think, moreover, that Maridort will perhaps have already told you so.

Thank you first of all for having made a commission to Hillel and for having transmitted to me his

reply, which reassured me as to his health; I wrote him a few words straight away. As for the troubles of another kind he talks about, I was not surprised, because I knew that his situation is unfortunately far from brilliant; the most annoying thing is that it is impossible to find any way to help him liquidate the interests he still has in Romania, which is not surprising with the current state of things in this country...

Coming to your article, I thought it was only a review of JB's book, but it seems to me that it was an excellent idea that you had to take it like this as an opportunity to treat a certain number of questions concerning the symbols, and that you can very well continue in this direction as you tell me that you intend to do; as for your fear that it will be a bit "disjointed", I don't think we should dwell on it, because it allows you to deal with different points, each of which would not be enough to be the subject of an article, but which are no less interesting for that. In short, I find that it is very well thus; Of course, on your return to Paris, you were able to correct the few inaccuracies of the kind you pointed out to me in your last letter, and no doubt also complete what you had left blank (in "The Grand Mystery Ugly Open") , I think it must be a trowel and a sword, but in what hand should each of its objects be held?). --A small detail while I think about it: I believe that it is necessary to write "graffiti" and not "graffiti"; I'm sure at least that's the spelling in Italian, and it must have been kept as is in French, but maybe it would be safer to check it anyway. -- About the signs of the monastery of the Carmelites of Loudun, I point out to you incidentally that, in addition to the forms which you indicate, there is still another one where one sees distinctly not only the letters A and M, but also the V; but doubtless there is no need to mention it in this connection, either because the letters Jÿ Mÿ Jÿ are in use among the Compagnons Charpentiers (probably because they have for patron Saint Joseph). -- Another thing: the word "Firt" exists in Latin and, in this case, could mean "he supports" or "he supports", which obviously has a relationship with the idea of "strength" that you indicate; this same idea is also found, on the other hand, in the interpretation according to which this word would be formed by the union of the initials of "Fortitudine ejus Rhodum Temeit".

I must say, moreover, that I do not know at what time the siege of Rhodes took place, to which reference is made, and where a prince of the house of Savoy had to intervene; I remember that, on the coins prior to Italian unity, mention is made of the title of "King of Cyprus and Jerusalem", which may have something to do with the same events. One thing that I have never managed to explain to myself is the reason why, according to Vuillaume, the motto FERT thus interpreted would also appear among those of the grade of Rose-Croix of Heredom. -- At the place where it is question of El-Khidr, you could perhaps refer in note to the article of Coomaraswamy, and also indicate the exact reference of the quotation of the Qurân which comes after (76, 21) . -- I seem to have seen the relationship between "vitis" and "vita" reported somewhere (perhaps by Ragon?), but I can't find it; that is not of great importance. -- About the word "evergreen" for which you tell me you have added a note, you know that in English it is the designation of evergreen plants; but, as when one employs in the same

feel the expression "green tree" in French, I wonder to what extent one thinks expressly in this case of the color green; what matters is rather the uninterrupted persistence of the vegetation, which makes it a symbol of immortality (and it is obviously because of this meaning that this name is given to American LLÿ); it is true that the color green is associated with it in fact, but somehow secondarily. -- What you say about the serpent's forked tongue seems correct to me; but what is the origin of the word "bisse" and what does it mean exactly? I wonder if it can also have something to do with the idea of duality, or if it's just an onomatopoeia imitating the hissing of the serpent; did you find any explanation for this? -- I believe, without being quite sure, that it was Wirth who made a connection between the shape of the trowel and the alchemical sign of sulphur; I don't quite know what importance should be attached to it, but in any case that is in no way in contradiction with what you say, since it is always a question of an essentially active principle. -- I don't see anything else to point out to you, and, as I have just read the whole thing again carefully, I hope that nothing will have escaped me.

I come to the other questions contained in your letters, and, first of all, I must call your attention to one thing which is incorrect: there is no root GAB, because, in Hebrew as in Arabic, any root is made up of three letters (it is understood that the vowels do not count). In reality, the roots GB' (I transcribe the letter AïN as best I can), "to be round", and GBR, "to be strong", are quite distinct, although they have the first two letters in common. On the other hand, there is, in both languages, a certain relationship of meaning between the roots GBR, "to be strong" and KBR, "to be great"; this is moreover quite often the case for words which only differ by the respective presence of the letters G and K in their root (it should be noted, moreover, that there are regions, in Iraq, where K substitutes for G in the vulgar pronunciation). On the other hand, regarding numbers, GB=75, GBR=205, KBR=222; I do not see at all in this what can give 131; perhaps you can explain to me where this number came from, and if there was confusion with some other word or just a miscalculation.

For the case where the number three is enough for the work to be possible, there is no need to look far, because, in the Maçÿ itself, three members are enough to form a "simple Lÿ" (commonly called "triangle" for this reason), which can work regularly as such, but which naturally cannot proceed to initiations, since it is neither "right" (5) nor "perfect" (7). -- In the operative Maçÿ, the works of the seventh degree are always accomplished by three people only, representing the three GGÿ MMÿ, and without the presence of any other assistant. In this regard, I must point out to you, in case you have not seen it yet, that there is in the "Speculative Mason" of last April a very interesting description of the annual rites of the Maçÿ operative; there are things in it that relate to some of the issues I talked about about the Lost Word, and also things that confirm what Mercier wrote in his article on the Landmarks. -- In the Islamic Turuq, it takes seven to do the dhikr in its complete form in common, but however it is enough to be three to do it.

do some parts.

The sacred word of the third degree, in the form it has in the French rite, is quite unknown in England; it was surely in France that it was used as a password, but I can't remember now whether it was in the Adonhiramite rite or in some other rite that has now disappeared.

I do not see much better than you how to explain the absence of the rank of Royal Arch in France; however, it should be taken into account that, in England, many things have been reintroduced little by little to fill as much as possible the gaps in the organization of 1717, starting moreover with the rank of Master himself even. It is also to be noted that this corresponds in part to the seventh operative degree, I mean with regard to the legend of Hiram; this is no doubt why the degrees of Mark and even of Royal Arch are generally regarded as developments more closely related to the degree of Companion; but it is obvious that no real logical order has been restored in all this, which shows how difficult it was to repair the "damage" caused by Anderson and his associates. Wirth wrote somewhere that "Anderson was above all very good at spoiling everything he touched", and this assessment seems to me quite justified!

The differences between the "techniques" of Maçÿ and hermeticism naturally correspond to those which exist between construction work and work that could be called "metallurgical" as the basis of their respective symbolisms; it should however be noted that the symbol of the "stone" is used equally in both cases, and with meanings which are far from being unrelated to each other (see on this subject the notes on pages 88 and 89 of the "Great Triad" (1946 edition of the round table).

Your remark about the possibilities offered to some by the additional grades is correct, although this may not be the only reason for their existence, because there is also a kind of role to take into account. conservation" played by Maçÿ with regard to the forms they represent, due to the fact that it is the only initiatory organization that has survived in the West with sufficient vitality to ensure this at least relative conservation; Clavelle has moreover made quite clear allusions to this question in his work for the third degree.

What you tell me about Danier, J. Madaule, etc., is really very singular; whatever the intentions of one or the other, there seems to me no doubt that any infiltration by Maritain or his group should be prevented if possible. -- I think JB is like Ambelain, on very bad terms with J.

Chaboseau for quite a long time already; according to something that Bastien told me and which I did not fully understand, I wonder if it was not because of this hostility that Ambelain ceased, it seems, any activity in the Rectified Regime (contrary to what his brochure on Martinism would seem to suggest). As for P. Mariel, it is really curious that he never appeared in the library as he had announced; it is likely that he will have had knowledge of the information given about him by Clavelle and that this will have been enough to take away any desire to follow up on this intention! You must have noticed, on the other hand, that what I wrote on the subject of the "collective unconscious" relates in part to the article which he published in the "Symbolisme" of May. I had no idea where the

Barenton Castle; I must also say that I have never had the opportunity to know this region...

Granger also told me about his discoveries concerning J. Kléberger, but with less complete details than those you gave me; there are always a lot of things in there that seem to me very difficult to sort out, and it is moreover understandable that the written documents can only relate to the "external" activity of the character. -- It is strange that the two medals bear the same date and the same age as the portrait of Dürer; should we conclude that everything was actually done in the same year, which would be quite surprising, or that these indications have a purely symbolic value? As for the so-called "trademark", which is undoubtedly something else entirely, I don't know if you have noticed its resemblance to certain "signatures" such as are found in Agripa in particular, and which are in fact combinations of characters grouped in a way quite similar to that of shorthand abbreviations.

For the protection that would have been granted to Dürer by several successive emperors, the chronological errors that you have pointed out surprise me on the part of Barmont, because I would have believed that he had at his disposal more reliable historical "sources" and less "within everyone's reach" than Bouillet's dictionary; this is at least what seemed to result from certain quotations for which I must moreover admit that I never really understood the reasons for the mystery with which he surrounded them.

For the Vaudois, Granger told me that he was going to try to get information from Italy; only, I wonder up to what point those which still exist in Piedmont can have preserved the doctrine and the original rites; Did not their association with Protestantism and the influence they were able to undergo alter their character? Some think that the Waldensians emerged from a movement of Franciscan origin, whose tendencies they simply exaggerated; if this were really so, the possible links with the "Faithful of Love" could perhaps be explained quite easily by this; and it also reminds me that I once heard certain disciples of Maritain accuse the Franciscans of being "Gnostics in disguise"! -- I point out to you incidentally that Fy Saverio Fera, who was Gÿ Commÿ of the Supÿ Conÿ of Italy, was a Waldensian pastor.

I know of the "Histoire des Religions" published by Quillet only the single chapter of Lantoine on Maçÿ, of which he had sent me a separate print. -- I was not aware of the facts of which you speak about Japan, but I am not at all surprised, especially as regards Shinto.

To come back to JK and his "affinities", it is a bit difficult to recognize oneself in the midst of so many characters, some of whom are not very well known; I don't know at all, for example, where one could find precise information on Tucher and other Nurembergers, nor how their hostility against JK can be explained, especially since this is complicated by the enigma of the three rings, if however it is indeed of the same Tucher that Dürer made the portrait. -- What appears in any case certain, it is that JK, while having always continued to make profession of Catholicism, had especially relations on the side of the Reformed ones; in this respect, the problem is basically much the same for him as for Dürer, except that,

from your remarks, it seems that Dürer rather "worked" with the Lutherans and JK with the Calvinists; Be that as it may, there must surely have been some hidden reason for all this, and it cannot have been simply a question of individual sympathies, which would not really explain anything, since there is no It's not just two or three isolated cases; that besides the financial activity of JK was used to "cover" something else, that is completely probable... -- Another point which is rather obscure, it is what relates to the will of JK and its nocturnal burial; assuming for this one the explanation which you contemplate and which is indeed plausible (because it goes without saying that in any case he cannot be said to have been a "disciple" of Calvin), there still remains a unresolved question: what could possibly have been the reasons why his death was kept hidden for several days? I know that this has sometimes happened for sovereigns, for any dynastic or political motives; but, for an individual, the thing seems much more abnormal.

It is to be hoped that you will be able to find with more precision when and how the affirmation of "free examination" made its appearance, it is quite certain that, in Calvin himself, it would have been very little compatible with the uncompromising attitude for which some criticize him, especially regarding the death of Servetus. -- Of course, I understand very well how you found yourself led to take an interest in this question of Calvinism after that of Lutheranism, and I must say that, for my part, I did not find anything worrying there. As for your "exoteric choice, I see that you had first considered another solution than that of Anglicanism; don't forget to tell me about it again as you promise me, because I don't know everything it's about.

About the Paraclete, I remember that Clavelle once alluded to the possibility that some of its members had been in contact with JK, but he had told me nothing about Riçonnet; moreover, he must always talk to me about certain people in François Premier's entourage, but no doubt, as there are always many other things of more immediate urgency, he was not able to find the time so far.

The question of the origin of the Christian priesthood is very obscure, like all that relates to the first times of Christianity, and I am quite persuaded that this obscurity was wanted to dissimulate certain changes which occurred during this period; I also touch on this question in the article, the first part of which will appear in this month's issue (article that I was led to write rather despite myself, as Clavelle will be able to explain to you (Traditional Studies of September 1949 number 27 and following Marginal note by LJ). the rest, although I must confess that I do not see exactly how. Anyway, according to some, the primitive hierarchy would have included only the bishops and the deacons; the priests would then have been only, according to the etymological meaning of their designation, the "elders" of the community, who only exercised functions of a purely administrative nature. I remember in particular having heard this thesis developed, a long time ago by a certain Father Trambly, a former

Trappist who was perhaps not very orthodox in all respects, but who certainly had considerable scholarship (he was also a doctor of theology).

Only, if it were really so (of course I cannot affirm anything myself, not having the necessary documentation), the existence of the episcopate, with the apostolic succession which it implies, would not remain of it. less a very essential element; this same Father Trambly insisted a lot on this, even saying clearly that any church without bishops should be considered as non-existent. If this be admitted, there is in the case of the Reformation, and more particularly of Calvinism, something which seems truly inexplicable and impossible to justify; I made a point of pointing out this point of view to you, and you will tell me what you think of it. -- On the other hand, why should a hierarchy similar to the pontifical hierarchies of antiquity necessarily have been a "borrowing" from them, and why shouldn't it also have existed in Christianity from its origin? If the first Christianity had an initiatory character as it seems, such a similarity appears on the contrary as quite natural and even as it were necessary. In any case there is no doubt that the essential modifications, whatever they () were, were already finished at the time of Constantine, as you say, and even still a little earlier, and that it is especially at this time that the work intended to conceal what had previously existed had to be done; if it is a question of a passage from esotericism to exotericism, the reasons which made such dissimulation inevitable are quite easy to understand.

The texts of pastors that you quote at the end of your letter are very interesting, and I find in them, in short, some of the ideas that Pastor Lecerf once supported; only, at that time, those who followed him were very few, while it would seem that now, on the contrary, this tendency has prevailed in France over that of the "liberals". There remains the question of Calvin's "Thomism", which does not seem to be confirmed by what you are telling me; I do not believe, however, that Lecerf, who opposed it to the Augustinianism of Luther, could have supported such a thing lightly...

The article in which Father Daniélou refrained from raising the question of the episcopate seems to me, just like to you, to proceed from a "tactic" which, to say the least, lacks frankness. ; and, unfortunately, your conclusion on this point is probably only too fair, especially when one thinks of the way in which the Eastern Churches rallied to Rome have already been treated, to whom certain concessions had first been presented in such a way as to to make believe that they had a final character, whereas they were transformed thereafter into simple provisional tolerances!

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, November 11, 1949.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

It's been a long time since I received your letter of October 1 and 4,

and I think, moreover, that Maridort should have told you so that you would not be worried about it, especially since there are still many abnormal things in the correspondence at the present time. I apologize for being so late to you again this time; the truth is that I'm getting less and less able to cope with everything I have to do, and it's even starting to get really worrying. It would be high time now for me to attend to my work for the December issue; however, I do not want to delay perhaps another week to write to you. I hope to finish for this issue my article on "Christianity and Initiation", which has developed much more than I thought when I started; the incidents which compelled me to write it are indeed very regrettable, as you say, and, although the first part did not provoke the "outburst" which I feared, I wonder what will finally come out of all of this ; Clavelle will surely tell you about it...

Thank you very much for your good wishes on the occasion of Ahmed's birth; he has just turned two months old and is doing wonderfully; let's hope it will continue like this, because children's health is often a big concern...

Our friend from Saint Jean-le-Thomas wrote to me that he could not go to the last Convent for "economic" reasons; Unfortunately, his situation still does not seem to be improving in this respect. -- About the Coven, it is certain that the impression that emerges is not very favorable this time, and this difference with last year is even rather surprising, although, to tell the truth, such a lack of continuity is not exceptional in the "behaviour" of assemblies of any kind. Marty's bad mood is understandable, but what is particularly annoying for the GT is that he seems to blame JC for the failure of his project; there was surely no need yet for this new cause of disharmony!

Regarding the motto FERT, it is rather singular that this siege of Rhodes to which it alludes, according to one of the interpretations that have been given of it, seems never to have actually taken place; Where did this "legend" come from? I had never heard of the name "Comte Vert" given to the founder of the Annonciades; do historians give any explanation? -- For the word "bissa", I had not thought of this Italian etymology; in any case, this word in itself is surely curious; do we know when it was adopted as a heraldic term? -- I hope you can tell me about the value 131 assigned to Gabÿ, because it intrigues me; I still don't see how it can be obtained at all.

The "initiator toilet" of the different degrees in England seems inspired by reasons of "symmetry" in some way; I don't know if this usage is really very old, which would obviously give it more importance. In any case, the uncovered right arm is something very widespread; to the different examples that you cite, we can add that of the "ihrûna" of the pilgrimage; but the reason why it is in the second degree is not very clear. However, it is as opposed to the uncovered left arm in the first degree, and this, which would generally be an anomaly in a traditional costume, may correspond to the condition of the layman. What reminds me of this is that, in the Maghreb, the burnous is worn with the opening on the right, in order to release the right arm; but formerly the Jews were forced to wear it with the opening on the left like

distinctive mark. As for the third degree, the comparison with the representations of Zeus, without being impossible, seems to me very doubtful. -- What you noticed on the statues of Goudéa is curious; the connection with the text of Isaiah that you quote seems to me more than probable; it is also possible (but I wouldn't dare say anything about it) that this same text inspired the application of the seal of the Lÿ, although moreover this is done on the arm of the recipient and not on his shoulder. Another thing about this: according to the Islamic Tradition, the Prophets have on their body a "seal" or a particular mark; only, this is not on the shoulder, but, it seems, in the upper part of the back, a little below the cervical region, that is to say, in short, between the two shoulders.

As for the "corpse" of the "little Lumÿ", if one took it as symbolizing the death of the "old man", it would somewhat duplicate the skull of the reflection cabinet. It seems to me that the most plausible explanation is that which relates, as you say, to the ancient "human sacrifice" for the foundation of a building; some have also considered a similar interpretation for Hiram's murder itself, but unfortunately I can't remember at all where I saw this and therefore give you the references. In any case, what is certain is that this "human sacrifice" (in Sanskrit "purusha-mâdha") is a representation of that of the primordial Purusha according to the Veda; you will be able to refer on this subject to my article "To gather what is scattered", and you will see that I also envisaged this significance there for the murder of Osiris and that of Hiram. It is perhaps not without interest to note again, with regard to this interpretation, that, in the first instance, the recipient sees the "corpse" only from afar and more or less indistinctly, while he will have to identify with him in the third degree; it is easy to understand that someone who has just come out of the profane state is not fit to be the victim of this sacrifice, which implies a kind of "divinization".

For the passage of the "Inferno" where Virgil makes Dante turn around so that he does not see Medusa, it seems to me that the essential point is this: it is a question of avoiding the "petrification" caused by the gaze of the said Medusa; now, in general, the fact of returning or looking back, on the contrary, is precisely said to result in "petrification"; there is thus there a kind of inversion which can be related to the fact that the thing occurs during the "descent". I believe that in short it is in the very idea of "petrification" that the explanation must reside above all; I'm not sure right now how exactly that could be worded, but maybe you can think about it a bit and let me know what you think. -- As for the "sent from Heaven", the ordinary interpretation regards him as an angel and moreover "angel" means "sent"); the difficulty is to know what it represents here in a more precise way. It seems to me just as unlikely as it does to you that it is Aeneas, and there is probably no reason to even try to identify him with any historical personage; why not look at him rather, according to the very words he utters, as a kind of personified expression of the divine Will, in accordance with the doctrine according to which an angel is above all, in reality, the manifestation of a divine attribute? -- For the story of Ulysses, lines 94--96 would be more particularly likely to justify your interpretation; on the other hand, the mention of the Pillars of Hercules, as a limit that

the man should not cross, is to be noticed, in connection with what I pointed out at the end of my article "About the two saint Johns"; they seem to indicate here that Odysseus has followed an illegitimate path, and, although he sees the mountain of Purgatory from afar, he cannot arrive there, let alone reach the "Earthly Paradise" which is at its top.

Baptism, in the early days, was conferred exclusively by bishops, and that only on a fixed day (I believe it was the eve of Easter); the extension of the right to confer it on every Christian, and at all times, is obviously a consequence of the fact that it was considered an indispensable condition for "salvation", so that it had to be made so easily accessible that it could be; of course, this is also what explains why it has come to be given to children as soon as possible after birth. This way of considering baptism does not seem to have existed originally, and it even seems that, in certain churches at least, those who were born of parents who were already Christians were considered as Christians by right and were not baptized, which has led some to think that Christian baptism was derived from the baptism of proselytes which was in use among the Jews. I spoke about this question to Clavelle some time ago; it is, in short, as complex and as obscure as anything relating to the origins of Christianity. -- Be that as it may, I do not think that the validity of the baptism of Protestants has ever been disputed; but the other rites cannot be performed in the absence of priests, and there cannot be priests where there are no bishops to confer ordination; So we always come back, ultimately, to the question of the episcopate and the apostolic succession. On the other hand, it is true, as you say, that Christ placed no other conditions on his presence than that of being gathered together in his name; but still it would be necessary to know all that is actually implied, notably from the ritual point of view, by the words "in his name", the meaning of which is quite different, and much more "technical", than what they can represent for moderns; I have already made a few allusions to it, and perhaps I will have the opportunity to return to it one day or another. The formula "Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia" must undoubtedly be considered as being in connection with this same question, the name of "Ecclesia" applying properly to the meeting "in the name of Christ". The discussions in relation to the "ecumenical movement" are certainly interesting, but what they seem to me to prove above all is that currently there are everywhere many divergences bearing on the very notion of the Church; and it could be that the more or less complete forgetting of the original meaning of the expression "in the name of Christ" has much to do with all these difficulties. -- If one considers an initiatory origin of Christianity, there should be, in this respect, a ritual form of invocation being the object of a regular transmission; this became impossible with the "exteriorization", at least for the generality of Christians, but something of this kind has been preserved until our days in hesychasm, and this is moreover one of the reasons which allow to consider it as having a truly initiatory character.

The new information concerning Dürer again confirms his close ties with the Reformation, and I now explain to myself something which I had not been able to understand until now: concerning Barmont's article, someone (I

believe, without being quite sure, that it must be Préau) had raised the question of Dürer's "Lutheranism" and quoted the words that the latter would have pronounced on learning of Luther's death; now, as Clavelle had pointed out, there was a chronological impossibility here, since Dürer died first; but I believe it was really what he wrote when the rumor of Luther's death was falsely circulated; the impossibility in question was therefore only apparent, and, as far as I remember, these words were indeed those which you reproduce.

Regarding the Franciscans, the story of Fr. Elie is indeed very curious and would seem to indicate that there was "something" at the beginning, but which would not have lasted long; it could however be that this was still preserved for some time among some members of the Order (I am thinking here in particular of Joachim de Flore), but, in any case, it goes without saying that there are none left. nothing today. There is often among the Capuchins (I am not speaking of the other branches of the Minor Brothers) a certain intellectual oddity, but which certainly does not indicate any esoteric knowledge; I remember that, about the extraordinary linguistic rantings of Fr. Hilaire de Barenton, a priest said to me one day this reflection: "we will never know everything that can pass through the head of a Capuchin! "-- I knew that Saint Anthony of Padua had the specialty of finding lost objects, but I did not know that he was more particularly concerned with keys, which, given the role he seems to have played, is indeed rather ironic . A very amusing story is that of the jealousy that the popularity of this saint aroused among the Dominicans, always in rivalry with the Franciscans, and which gave birth to Saint Expeditus; do you know her? -- To come back to the main question, it is certain that the failure of attempts to redress Catholicism may have led to the search for another solution; what is certainly surprising in this case is that the Reformation had such unfortunate consequences from the traditional point of view... It is true that there is also, on the other hand, the fact that it seems, as you say, to have had, since the sixteenth century, a rather considerable number of authentic initiates among the Protestants; but could this not be explained, at least to some extent, by the growing hostility of the Catholic authorities towards all esotericism? It must also be recognized that some, like Jacob Boehme, were also the target of many persecutions in their own Church.

Canon Paquier had specialized in the study of Luther and Augustinism; it was not he who spoke to me about Calvin's Thomism, but pastor Lecerf; the latter insisted in particular, in this respect, on the theory of "physical premotion", but I admit that at present I would be unable to explain what it is exactly because these are things that are easily forget.

As for the criticisms against St. Thomas which you have raised in Calvin, it is possible that they bear only on more particular points; the absence of any other mention of Saint Thomas does not prove much, for, at that time, it was not much the practice to expressly quote the authors whose ideas one adopted, whereas on the contrary it was necessary name them when you wanted to show that you differed in opinion with them. --- As for Fr. Daniélou and what you say about the Last Supper, I have the impression more and more that he has, in many circumstances, a somewhat "political" attitude. "which is not made for

inspire great confidence...

According to the details you give me, it seems that a falsification of JK's will cannot be envisaged; the enigma of the burial always seems to me difficult to solve. -- I know nothing of the history of Berne in the sixteenth century, but there may indeed be some interesting things on this side; I have always thought that the bear whose name this town bears must have a symbolic value, probably dating back to the Celts. --- It would also be interesting to study more completely, if at all possible, the case of Briçonnet; Clavelle had told me some time ago that he would speak to me again about certain people in François Premier's entourage, but so many other more urgent things have happened that he never had to find the time. About François Premier, I had pointed out to him the passage of the book of Ambelain on Martinism where it is question of the "Agla"; there are surely fanciful assertions here (the figure four, for example, is in no way a particular sign for printers as he claims), but there are also points which would require closer examination.

I think Clavelle and Granger will let you know what I replied to what they both wrote to me about daily personal work; -- Detoit Manbrini was a Protestant pastor, although I believe that he no longer exercised a ministry when he wrote his work; I have this one, but I haven't read it for a long time; despite the interesting things it certainly contains (I seem to have quoted two or three of them in L'Erreur spiritiste), I must say that it left me, on the whole, the impression of something something a little too nebulous and diffuse.

Don't forget to tell me about your "polytrevist" solution and the cult of the "Dia Dia"; can you also tell me what is the similarity of geographical situation that you have noticed between Arles and Cairo?

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, December 6, 1949

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

I have just received your letter of November 29, and I am glad to see that mine did not take very long to reach you.

I thank you for the various things that you were kind enough to undertake to communicate to me on behalf of Clavelle and Maridort. -- The "leads" of the corporations (I have a somewhat vague memory of having seen some in the Cluny museum in the past) were undoubtedly the same thing as what is called "Tokens" in English.

The name of Saint Blaise is indeed the ancient word "bleiz", which means wolf; there is also Saint Loup, which is the Latin translation of the same name, and Saint Leu, which is only a variant. The symbolism of the wolf is generally related to light; it was particularly so among the Greeks (ÿÿÿÿÿ, wolf, and ÿÿÿÿ, light, hence the name of the Lycian Apollo), and it seems that it was the same among the Celts; I have never found anywhere the indication of a connection with lightning or lightning, but,

as the lightning is also a light, the thing is not absolutely impossible.

The story of the burial and the resurrection of the Alleluias, which I did not know at all, is really very curious, it does not seem doubtful indeed that it implies a kind of assimilation to Christ, because I do not I don't see how these rites could be understood otherwise; but then one can wonder when and how this word, which is in reality neither a name nor an epithet, could well have been taken in this way to designate Christ; did you find any indication on that?

What you tell me about Clouard's book seems to indicate indeed that his sympathies are not on the side of AF; it is true that he may have fallen out with her, like Maritain and others; in any case his admiration for Claudel seems really excessive!

As regards the question of baptism reserved for bishops, it is probable, from what you are pointing out to me, that this does not go back quite to the beginning of Christianity, but nevertheless it is in any case mentioned in the Fathers who predate the Council of Nicaea (I seem to remember that this is particularly found in Origen); but what I don't quite understand is the reason that could have led to this restriction at a certain moment, while, on the other hand, the subsequent generalization of the faculty of baptizing is easily explainable.

The exclusion of women from this right, according to the "Didascalia", is also quite singular; decidedly, all this is extremely obscure, and even seems to become all the more so the more one wants to examine it more closely... I would like to ask you what an "Andean" bishop is, because this word reminds me of absolutely nothing; there is also the question of the "Apostolic Constitutions" on which I have never seen much; but of course we would never be done with all that. Incidentally, I point out to you that there is reason to be wary of the works of Mgr. Duchesne, whose modernist tendencies are strongly accentuated, which is not without influence on the very exposition of historical facts. --As to the date on which baptism was conferred, there may have been differences among the churches, but I believe that in any case the eve of Easter was quite general. For Pentecost, it would seem, logically at least, that it should rather be suitable for confirmation, but, to tell the truth, I have never found anything on this point.

For the story of the secretary of the Eudique Order, I had indeed asked Maridort if he could give me some explanations; I had been particularly intrigued by the allusion he made to an attack on Saint Paul, and I was far from suspecting that it was a question of a "discovery" of this force; where could this have come from? I was also surprised at D. de G.'s recommendation, but I believed that at least he knew him personally; what you are telling me makes it even more extraordinary. It is certain that, in general, it is better to hear a candidate to realize more exactly what he is, but, in this special case, I believe that reading his "curriculum vitae" was largely sufficient! "As for the altruistic surgeon, whose projects I already knew from Clavelle, he is probably not very dangerous, but I fear that he risks being somewhat cumbersome. I had understood that it was above all Cerf who supported his candidacy; I didn't know Marty was that interested in it as well.

Thank you for the historical information regarding the FERT currency and the

foundation of the Annonciade; this non-existent siege of Rhodes is truly bizarre. I also notice that the mottoes of the "Green Count" are rather enigmatic; I suppose that "mo anstre", must, by anagram be for "my star", but what can "Alahac" mean? -- The article on Nostradamus which I reported on is indeed published in a separate brochure, and I have never seen anything else from the journal in which it appeared.

In reality, Saint Expedit belonged neither to the Order of Friars Preachers nor to any other, for the good reason that he never existed. At a chapter of the Dominicans, they complained about the great success of Saint Anthony of Padua, and they said that it would also be necessary to have a saint who could compete with him, to which someone replied: "Expedited", that is- i.e. "it fits". This word seemed to be a ready-made name for the new saint; another of its meanings determined its "specialty", which was to bring hurried business to a successful conclusion; and, as it was necessary to "situate" him historically somewhere, he was made one of the martyrs of the Theban Legion, which was obviously unverifiable. In connection with the role assigned to him, he was represented crushing under his foot a crow which, by its croaking, said "cras" (tomorrow), to which the saint replied "hodie" (today), a word inscribed on a cross he holds in his hand; it must be recognized that all of this was very ingeniously combined, but I believe like you that Saint Anthony of Padua still has a larger "O

On the "rhomboid", I believe that there is nothing very precise in the old texts, but only allusions, since one could never know what it was exactly; I have a vague memory that there must be something in one of the treaties of Iamblichus, but nevertheless I would not dare to affirm it too much. I only see Mario Meunier who could give information on this, and moreover I seem to remember that he had spoken to me about it in the past; if Clavelle still sees him from time to time, maybe he could ask him that on occasion.

The arrangement you propose for the questions at the beginning of the instruction may indeed be the best solution; in any case, it is perfectly acceptable that way.

The magazine "Ur" was edited by Evola; as the latter had then fallen out with Reghini, the latter then made "Ignis" as a sequel to "Atanor"; But I don't know if Parise also collaborated on "Ur" despite these dissensions.

As you can imagine, it is completely within the role of the Roofer to shake the rock barrel. -- I don't remember if I pointed out to you that everything I told you about thunder etc., helps to justify the interpretation of the enigmatic "faculty of abrac" by "ha-baraq" (in Hebrew) or "el-barq" (in Arabic), lightning or lightning.

About the Zumzumians, here is what is found verbatim in a series of notices entitled "Arcane Associations" and published by the "Societas Rosicruciana in America" (1905): "Ancient Order of Zuzimites. -- The Order of Zuzimites are not much known in the United States, except by membership in the Order abroad. The Order is a secret society, analogous to Masonry but in no way antagonistic to it, nor to the various rites and ceremonies of Masonry. The Order is claimed to date back to the second century AM Authentic chronicles mention the Zuzimites in the year 2097 AM, or about 3809 years ago, as being "a people great and many" (Gen., 14,

5). There are 51 recognize degrees, subdivided into several series. The first three are Neophyte, Graduate and fellow; these constitute Zuzimitism proper. The next two degrees constitute Marked Zuzimitism. Then the series are descended as Celestine Zuzimitism. Then follow the series Arch, Acetasite, Cabbalite, and Armité Zuzimites; and finally Zam Zuzimites, or Zamzuminus. They have their Tents, and Grand Tabernacles. The work of the Order is claimed as marly perfect. Seven members may organize a Tent. "-- This gives the answer to your question; I no longer remembered the exact title of the Order, which singularly deforms the Hebrew word..... which is found more or less correctly in the demonstration of the last degree only); the imitation of the Maçÿ is evident on several points. Apart from that, I have never found any other information on this organization.

I have the volume entitled "Official Medicine and Heretical Medicines"; the best article, in my opinion, is that of Dr. Galimard, in spite of certain inexact or dubious "correspondences" which I pointed out to him; as for that of Dr. Winter, it was only a sketch of a more important work which he had in view, but which he seems not to have been able to find the time to do so far. -- What you noted in the article on the miraculous cures is really enormous indeed; I don't need to tell you that I entirely agree with your thoughts on this!

Your remarks about the traditional "filiations", with regard to the Islamic tradition and hermeticism as "legacy" of the Egyptian tradition, are quite justified as well. On this subject, I must point out to you that, in pre-Islamic times, there has always existed among the Arabs, at least in a minority (which has no doubt become few in number in recent times), what was called "ed dîn el-hanîf", which was considered identical to the very religion of Abraham; continuity was thus maintained from Ishmael to Islam.

I cannot say if anything of the influence of the "Ancients" really remained in the American rituals now in use; I only know that there were, as you say, LLÿ established both by the "Ancients" and by the "Moderns", and that the members who passed from one to the other of the two Obediences had to be "regularized" (the thing being reciprocal). A question that I have never been able to find an explanation for is the origin of the notable difference between the English and American rituals of the rank of Royal Arch. -- The maintenance of body disqualifications is now much debated even in America, and for quite secular reasons; I said a few words about it in a review of the "Speculative Mason" (in the March 1948 issue of ET).

The question of the relationship between the rooster and the mercury would surely require closer examination; I hope you can talk to me about it next time. -- For the rooster on the drum, I hadn't thought of referring to Lanoi-Villedieu, whose interpretations, to tell the truth, are often very debatable; in any case, as far as the "holy war" and the "great peace" are concerned, you are absolutely right.

What you tell me about this old apron worn by the Venÿ of the Lÿ of Avignon would be such as to confirm that the cord must indeed go around the waist twice; there would surely be an interest in re-establishing the thing in a general way, because of what we have talked about about the "cable-tow".

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, March 6, 1950.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

I did receive your two letters of February 6 and 10, but I took much longer than I would have liked to reply to them; I hope you will excuse me. - - Thank you first of all for your good wishes for all of us; I hardly dare to address mine to you, so little will they be in season now, and yet believe me that they are no less sincere for that! The discomforts caused by the cold contributed a lot to making me late for everything; Fortunately, it seems to be finally over.

Thanks also for the information for Gomer; I see that I was not mistaken in thinking that it was a fault; but I'm not quite sure I read it correctly: is he exactly Gamel or Gomel?

I received the new "Three Rings" ritual, which I find very good overall; as your letter had made me foresee, there is an inaccuracy for the "G. and RS " (also called "S. of joy and exaltation"), but I gave Maridort the necessary indication to rectify it . -- For the reversal of the table of the third degree, I don't see any other way to proceed than the one you say, but I don't really know if we can really make a connection with the "moving of the lights " of Kabbalah, which seems to relate in reality to the transference of the center of consciousness from the content of the heart.

The "Tokens" are not coins strictly speaking, but medals of various shapes; the "speculative Mason" has given some reproductions of it, but I no longer see the date and I can't find it at the moment. There was also among the ancient Romans something of the same kind, which bore, if I remember correctly, the name "Tessera". -- The phonetic assimilation of Saint Louis to Saint Loup or Saint Lou is indeed not impossible; Louis and Clovis are indeed the same name, and the old Germanic form is Hludwig, with a strong guttural aspiration at the beginning.

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I agree with you that it is not modern "critical" works that will be able to dispel the obscurity surrounding primitive Christianity. -- About the Andes, I have not yet received the "didascalie", but I hope from what you tell me, that I will receive it soon, and I thank you in advance.

You were telling me about Mordvinoff's disease; almost immediately after, I learned the sad news of his death, which I was far from expecting; I was all the more pained because I had known him well for a long time; it is the first of the members of the GT who disappears...

The story of the altruistic surgeon's candidacy is truly extraordinary from start to finish; it's also amazing that Marty took this matter so much to heart! -- as for B., I was very happy, as you can imagine, to learn

the rejection of his request by a large majority; but what is not very reassuring in spite of everything is that, in order to achieve this result, there had to be other reasons to invoke than his infirmity...

For the motto "Alhac", it cannot indeed be anything other than "Allah Ha A", that is to say "God (is) Truth"; I'm surprised I didn't think of that right away. -- As for the words which are in "The Grant Mystery beid open", I confess that I do not know what they are; could you point it out to me?

I don't know the Campbell-Everden book, and I don't know exactly what the expression "downwards" may refer to, but perhaps it is because, in operative Mac... Solomon's throne is in the West (which also corresponds to the real orientation of the Temple of Jerusalem, whose entrance was in the East). as for the seventh degree, it is quite true that it is conferred by three members only and without the presence of any other assistant.

The practice of giving confirmation immediately after baptism is not unique to the Armenian Church, but also exists in the different branches of the Orthodox Church; this obviously implies that it can be conferred by a simple priest, and not only by a bishop as in the Catholic Church. -- I believe that it is in all the Christian Churches that it is admitted that, in case of necessity, baptism can be conferred validly even by a non-Christian, and in any case it is so in Catholicism ; I was recently remarked that this seems completely normal, even for an exoteric rite, because it is a sacrament other than someone can transmit what he himself has not received. To tell the truth, I don't really know what to think of it or how one could justify it; This is another enigma among many others...

Your remarks about Hippocrates and Galen strike me as quite correct, and although it is still rather difficult to know what current attempts to "return to Hippocrates" may lead to, it is certainly not impossible that they have some connection with the "desolidification" of the world; but it would perhaps be going a little too far to want to consider repercussions of the same kind with regard to rites, and in any case I do not see at all what clues one could find of it at present.

It is rather singular that, in the "Parthenon" (Rÿ Lÿ), so much importance is attached to philosophical questions and other matters of an equally profane order; we must at least hope that you can get away with it without too much trouble... -- For your work, I don't see any other examples of name changes than those you cite, but that certainly does not mean that did not exist; it is understood that what was in use in this respect in the Strict Observance was maintained in the high ranks of the Rectified Regime. On reflection, there may also be the African Architects, but I cannot find any specific information on this that would allow me to affirm it. I do not think it is necessary to mention the mottos which served as the signature of the members of such a "phantasmagoric" organization as the "Golden Dawn", which moreover never claimed to have any Masonic character; moreover, this would necessarily entail speaking more generally of Rosicrucian and pseudo-Rosicrucian organizations, which would greatly complicate the question. An allusion at least to Companionship would perhaps be more

indicated, given its obvious relationship with the operative Maçÿ.

The author of the articles of "Symbolism" signed "The letter G" is François Ménard; it must have been a kind of collective signature, but, in fact, only he has ever used it so far. As for Persigout, Lepage quite simply "eliminated" him because he was annoyed by his continual display of badly digested erudition, which he even compares to that of F.-D.! The signature "Eques a Paracleto" naturally indicates that the said Persigout must have the rank of CBCS, but I have no idea from whom he may have received it. The same is also true of Probst-Biraben; I was completely unaware that he had this quality, but the last letter I received from him is signed "Eques a Palmo Resurgent".

Mercier told me about the project to found Franco-Italian LLÿ; he also wrote "Gÿ Lÿ of Italy", but this is however no reason why it is not in reality the Gÿ Oÿ, because, following the international recognition of the Supÿ Consÿ, the symbolic Atÿ of this Obÿ have constituted themselves, under the title of Gÿ Lÿ Nationale, into an autonomous organization whose situation vis-à-vis the Supÿ Consÿ is basically the same as that of the Gÿ Lÿ of France. Be that as it may, not only is what you told him perfectly correct, but there are also other reasons to be cautious, as I have just explained to him in replying to his letter. Indeed, the situation is still far from being completely clarified; even with regard to the Gÿ Oÿ, despite the recognition in principle, the American Supÿ Consÿ maintain an extremely reserved attitude; on the other hand, the various dissident Supÿ Consÿ which still existed in Italy merged a few months ago, and this resulted in the formation of a new Supÿ Consÿ which may well succeed one day or another to question everything.

I did not remember the letter from the Russian bishops which was mentioned in the past in the RISS; it is true that, at that time, I had no reason to pay particular attention to it. -- I never knew the name of the religious to whom Fr. Bouyer had spoken following the departure of Fr. Poucel, but I thought I understood, I don't really know why, that it was also a Jesuit.

I had not heard of the story of this "monster" which would have washed up on the coast of Egypt, so I would be unable to say what is true in it; it must be said that I have no time to see the newspapers, unless they point out to me something of special interest. I will have to try to remember to talk to Lionnet about this the next time I see him, because I hardly know anyone but him who, because of his duties at the Suez Canal, could be informed exactly on this subject.

Good fratÿ to you.

RG

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Cairo, June 4, 1950.

Ty Cŷ Fy,

I received your letter of May 22 a few days ago, but I have been so disturbed lately by all sorts of things that I have not been able to answer it right away. I was very happy to hear from you, for it had been a long time since I had heard from you, and I was even a little worried, Mercier having told me in his last letter that you were quite tired, but I'm glad to see you seem better now. He hadn't specified that you suffered from the liver; what Clavelle told you on this subject is very exact, and there is no doubt that there is a connection between the sensitivity of this organ and the importance that was formerly attributed to it for divination; I seem to remember that models of livers have been found in Chaldea which were apparently to be used for studies of this order.

The last letter I wrote to you must be dated March 6; did you receive it well in its time? I wonder all the same if you haven't written to me since then, because there are several things about which it seems that you have already spoken to me; For some time now, I have noticed almost daily that there are letters or other consignments that have gotten lost en route, which seems really abnormal and in any case very embarrassing. -- Clavelle, in sending me a copy of two lost letters, had attached a note saying that he would write to me soon, but that was already quite a long time ago and I have received nothing else; I hope that my work for the June issue has reached him well. -- On the other hand, I am very worried about Maridort, of whom I haven't heard for at least two months; I fear that the state of his affairs is the cause of this silence, but I have not had any great details on this (only a few allusions from Clavelle and Mercier), and I would really like to know what he is just about; would that have forced him to leave? I would still prefer that, because what I fear above all is that the worries and worries have made him sick...

I found your article very good; were you able to prepare the sequel? Marius Lepage seems to have believed that this article was mine, perhaps thinking that I had signed it with another name because of JB's bad character; I naturally undeceived him, and I thought that there was no harm in letting him know the true author.

I had asked you a question about Gomel or Gamel, not being sure of having read the word correctly in your last letter (or at least the last one I received); although the vowels have only a secondary importance, you will be very kind to give me the exact form, because I may have to allude to them in a future article, where I intend to return to what has been said. in the "Speculative Mason" about the letter G and the swastika.

I did not know that you had written to S. Debenhane; I thank you for communicating to me the important parts of his letter; all very interesting, but the point that remains a little worrying is that the information still comes from Clément Stretton, who is said to have "restored" the ritual in a way that cannot be entirely trusted. Mr. Bardon's name vaguely reminds me of something that must be related to articles that once appeared in a magazine.

American on which I have unfortunately still not been able to get my hands on. I could never fully understand what this "Slant Masons" story was, or even what the expression might mean exactly; I remember it was once mentioned in the "Speculative Mason," but I never heard of anything like it here; I don't know why the Europeans always blame Egypt for many fanciful things of all kinds... first words of the Gospel of Saint John in Greek: En Archê ên ho Logos"; but I doubt that, between the Greek "archê" and the word "arche", there can be anything more than a phonetic comparison one could think of a common root, whatever its original meaning, but that is not likely, because the Greek word would then have to be written with a Kappa and not with a chi. Approximate transcriptions often give rise to many unjustified assimilations; we see it especially for the Hebrew and Arabic words written somehow in Latin characters... -- Your hypothesis about the possible confidences of certain operative Masons is certainly very plausible, but there is an objection to this: it is that Sr. Bothwell-Gosse claimed to possess the seventh operative degree, and this is what made me think that there must still be some dissident organization there. admitting women; this is still a point which is not very clear.

On the subject of rituals, I believe that those of Scotland and Ireland may have kept certain elements older than those found in the most widespread English rituals today (and it is possible that the same is true of some American rituals derived from it); I don't know anything about the Oxford one. In any case, the passage you quote is very curious, and the allusion to the symbolism of navigation is particularly clear.

I can't remember right now what the phrase about "light in darkness and darkness in light" comes from; I will have to try to find that.

I see nothing on the Islamic side, which could indicate that Abraham would have received elements of the "pharaonic" Tradition; according to Josephus, followed by a good number of authors of the Middle Ages, it would be on the contrary him who would have taught certain sciences to the Egyptians.

Good fratry to you.

RG

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Cairo, July 4, 1950.

Ty Cÿ Fÿ,

I received your letter of June 15 some time ago; what prevented me from answering it instead was that a few days before, a huge packet of letters arrived that I thought had been lost (most of them dated 2 and 3 months) and which thus found in a way as inexplicable as their disappearance; I'm not

yet managed to put all this up to date!. Among these letters, there were of course several from Clavelle and Maridort, so that I learned of the accident which had happened to the exploitation of this one in Gabon, and that I also had news of his trip. in North Africa. On the other hand, it was only from you that I learned that Danier had been able to do something to fix Clavelle's situation, and I'm very surprised that I haven't yet received any letter more recent than the ninth of May. -- To tell the truth, I still miss a certain number of things, which are perhaps definitively lost; among them must be the letter in which one or other of our friends gave me the answer as to the spelling of "Gamel, etc., for it is not mentioned in any of those which are arrived (it was the absence of these letters that made me think that one of you must have gotten lost).

I have indeed, as you thought, the "Early Masonic Catechisms", as well as most of the works of D. Knoop, but unfortunately I have not yet had time to read everything; if I had thought that "The Great Mystery Ugly Open" was in this volume, I would have referred to it immediately when you told me about it. Among the words in question, there is very clearly "Lâ ilaha illâ'Llah" (whose translation is moreover given quite correctly: "There is no other God but God"). I also read, for the inventor of the secret word, "Shaikh Shihâbad-Dîn", followed by a second name (or rather a "laqab") probably distorted and which I cannot guess (there is indeed, as Known Shaikh, Shâbâb-d-Dîn Sahrawardi, but it does not seem possible that it is that). As for the rest, for the moment at least, it seems to me quite unintelligible; I try to pronounce these words anyway, in case it's some kind of rough phonetic transcription, it doesn't come up with anything that I can identify.

Only four or five days ago I received the "Symbolism" of June; so it was only after receiving your letter that I was able to read Lepage's report; it's quite boring indeed, but, looking at it carefully, it seems to me that, when he speaks of the "indisputable Master", his intention was only to express his own opinion (which I find astonishing by the way) and not to attribute it to yourself. It is no less regrettable that there may be ambiguity on this point, and even that your article has been taken as a pretext for such praise; but I'm not sure what we could do, and I'm going to have to think about that again. I don't know if there would really be any inconvenience in your writing to Lepage (Clavelle perhaps has an idea on this subject that escapes me); I could also talk to him about it myself on a future occasion, but I fear, if I intervene in this, that he will attribute it to some resentment caused by the more or less aggressive manifestations of JB towards me; What do you think ? - It is rather astonishing that the aforesaid JB wrote to you kindly, because it seems that it is hardly his habit; you have surely done better, in replying to him, not to mention the sentence concerning me. Besides, you know that if I preferred not to review his book, it was above all because I found it better not to risk provoking further disagreeable reactions from him.

Thank you for your explanation of the origin of your correspondence with MCD; I think that it must also be from her that the information reproduced by Lepage in his article on the "Jachin" comes. Doctor Thomas Carr, who is there

mentioned is the author of the articles of which I spoke to you and which unfortunately I still cannot find; his name had escaped me, but I recognized him as soon as I saw him. -- About Maurice Gloton, Clavelle told me that he had a very good impression of him; it is only a pity that he is hampered by a family environment which is obviously completely contrary to traditional ideas.

I don't understand how it is that Cerf has waited so long to talk to you about the second degree ritual again, because there is very little time left; under these conditions, you have probably done better to stick to what you say, because a complete "restoration" would be very difficult, and moreover it is certain that it is especially the usual "speeches" which are truly lamentable ; I therefore hope that you will be able to get away with it without too much trouble and that you will come to the end of it in due time. Of course, it would not be possible to send it to me soon enough for me to give you my observations, but I trust that you will send it to me all the same when it is finished, because it will interest me in all way.

Good fratÿto you.

RG

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Cairo, July 24, 1950.

Tÿ Cÿ Fÿ,

Your letter of July 15 reached me on the 21st; the correspondence seems to work much better at the moment, and it is to be hoped that it will continue like this...

I'm not surprised you were very taken with the arrangement of the second degree ritual; you must not be sorry to have finished, and it is to be hoped that you will have arrived at as satisfactory a result as possible; thanks in advance for sending a copy. -- What you say about the test by the square seems to me good, but I do not believe that there is reason to consider in this regard an assimilation of the recipient to the hypotenuse of the right-angled triangle, because, in reality, it seems to me that the square should rather be placed flat on his chest (it is not by the points of a square that one checks the straightness of an angle). As for the compass used at the beginning of the "raising", I do not know if there is a definite rule for the angle at which it must be opened, but I nevertheless seem to have seen somewhere that it is 60 degrees (angle of equilateral triangle). -- You have surely done well to remove the five "philosophers"; as for the two spheres, there is indeed not much to say about them, for there is no doubt that they are of very modern introduction, but, as they have obviously taken.....

[MISSING PAGE 164 RIGHT CORNER NUMBER, 93 MIDDLE NUMBER]

... well aware that their distinction corresponds to something which goes back further than the very formation of the Greek language; and the Chi must have sounded very close to that of sh (or the German soft ch), which is far from the

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sound of K.

Heard for what Marius Lepage wrote about your article; I won't talk to him about it, since you think it's better in the end. As for occasionally pointing out JB's bitterness towards me, I certainly see no harm in it; I just prefer not to do it myself; I hope you've finally been able to find his letter, because I'd be quite curious to see it.

I think that the article by Corneloup you are talking about must be in the "Symbolisme" of July, which I have not yet received; but long enough ago I realized that this absurd idea of a so-called "secular exotericism" was running through his head; specifically, it goes back to his report last year to G  Chap . It's very possible that the Pythagoreans, when they were persecuted, "sheltered" themselves in the artisan

colleges as you say, but some Nevertheless, links must have existed already before, just as, in the Middle Ages, there certainly existed between the Orders of chivalry and the initiations of a profession before the destruction of the Templars; Moreover, it is these very ties which, basically, explain why they were able to find shelter there at the desired time.

It is really curious that Luther, in his manifesto, took up almost verbatim the sentence of Tertullian that you quote; I don't really know how Tertullian himself could have heard it exactly, because after all ordination must have existed all the same in his time. It was perhaps only a "way of speaking", comparable to that of the Jews when they call themselves a "priestly people", although among them the priesthood proper has always been reserved exclusively for members of certain families. -- As for the transformation of "Christian liberty" into "free inquiry", it would be interesting to know when and how it occurred; have you still not been able to find any other details in this regard?

If most of the recent "Marian apparitions" (among which there are moreover some which have a rather suspicious character) have had only children as witnesses, it is no doubt because the latter are more sensitive to certain influences; moreover, many children have natural psychic faculties which gradually disappear, partly as a result of the education given to them, but perhaps also for other causes of a more general order, which are connected in short, to the very "solidification" of the terrestrial world.

Good frat to you.

RG

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Cairo, September 14, 1950.

T  C  F ,

The day before yesterday I received your plan for a ritual of the second degree; I think that my letter of July 24 reached you well in its time, and you will no doubt tell me about it in the one you announce to me.

What you point out to me about the number of mallet blows is curious in

indeed, because I suppose that you did not manage on purpose so that they coincide exactly with that of the English ritual. I wonder if this number 115 (23X5) can have any particular significance; I confess that I do not see her, at least for the moment; the translation into Hebrew letters gives nothing, or rather it gives a word which means "to vomit", which obviously is not an acceptable meaning...

I had believed that what you told me previously about the two celestial and terrestrial spheres applied to those which are placed on the two columns, because I had not understood that they also appeared on the fourth cartouche; naturally, under these conditions, I no longer find anything wrong with the explanation based on the zodiacal signs traced on the visible part of the celestial sphere.

In short, on the whole, the ritual seems to me good, at least as far as possible, because I hardly believe that one can arrive, for this degree, at something which is entirely satisfactory on all points. Perhaps certain explanations are a bit "summary", but, on the other hand, I believe that you have done well to reduce them to a certain extent to a minimum, which is moreover still justified by the remark that formerly no verbal explanation was even given. Especially since it is always possible to develop them as much as you want in subsequent instructions. In this regard, I wonder if we could not achieve something like the "readings" which exist in England for each degree, but, of course, without the "moralizing" character which has been given to them to the detriment of the strictly symbolic and initiatory point of view... In any case, in the ritual itself, the main thing was to bring out above all the role of Pythagoreanism as you have done.

There is a point which seems to me to call for a completely necessary rectification: it is the application of the square by the points, which does not really correspond to anything plausible; as I already told you in my last letter, there is no doubt that it must be placed flat on the recipient's chest, the angle being turned upwards. The thing is quite difficult with Venÿ's jewel, so perhaps this should lead to a modification in this respect as well; it seems to me, moreover, that, even apart from this consideration, it would be preferable to use a square larger than this one. Be that as it may, the objection concerning the way of applying the square is certainly the most serious that there is to formulate on the whole content of the ritual; what is essential in a square as a measuring instrument is the right angle, not the points, and moreover the respective length of the sides, which is very important in other cases, is here quite outside the question; to tell the truth, it even seems to me that it would be advantageous to use a square with equal branches to correspond to the symmetry of the human body.

For the tools to carry during the different trips, you know that there are many discrepancies; but the solution you have adopted seems acceptable to me, and it is certainly worth the others; this is undoubtedly one of the points which will always be the most difficult to fix in a really definitive way...

One could argue about the order in which the five senses are listed; I do not know exactly where you found the one you indicate, and which does not seem to me

match any traditional data. One should perhaps not be too rigorous for all the details, which would involve a lot; but in any case, if we simply want to rank the senses in their order of importance, shouldn't touch be placed before smell and taste?

I must point out a mistake in Greek that needs to be corrected: it is gnothi (and not gnosi) seanton.

About the acanthus, it should be noted that the shape of its leaves is related to the symbolism of the spiral, but it would undoubtedly be quite difficult to introduce this consideration explicitly into the ritual; the spiral is also found in the form of the fifth journey, where its course from outside to inside naturally ends in the center.

About the letter G as initial of five words drawn from the Greek, the thing is not exact for "generation" which is purely Latin; the equivalent word of Greek origin would actually be "genesis". On the other hand, among these five words, the one which is to be highlighted more particularly in the second degree, and which consequently should be mentioned in the first place, is "geometry"; it is even the only one which is essential there, the others being only quite secondary and somewhat artificial additions; while I am at this point, I add that "gammadion", apart from the fact that it somehow "duplicates" with "gamma" from which it derives moreover directly, has never, in reality, was formerly used to designate the swastika; on this I will refer you to my article in the July-August issue (it was quite late, but it may have finally appeared now, although I haven't received it yet). On rereading, I realize that you wrote "ganuna" and not "gamma" as I had read it first; but the objection relating to the real meaning of the word "gammadion" remains none the less.

Nothing to note concerning the biography of Pythagoras, except that it would perhaps have been good to underline his relationship with the Delphic Apollo (and Hyperborean, since this one was properly the "Geometric God" , so that this is again a point which has a more particular importance for the second degree.

What you envision for the theme of second degree journeys seems very good to me in principle; I'll have to think about it again, but these studies of numerical correspondences should be fairly easy to do. -- For the third degree, writing these last days to Marius Lepage, I asked him to send you a copy of his ritual, and I do not doubt that he will do it willingly; You'll tell me what you think about it.

The Fy Parise is indeed the former director of the review "Atanor"; last year, a certain Fy Gorel Porciatti had the idea of taking over this review, and he even registered me "automatically" on the editorial board without waiting for the acceptance he had asked for ; I received the first issue, which by the way was rather insignificant and bore no resemblance to the old review of the same name, and it seems to me that things ended there, for since then I have never again heard of nothing.

I am happy with what you teach me about the question of the relations of Gÿ Oÿ with Dÿ Hÿ; only it is quite certain that the obligation of a "reinitiation", instead of a simple "regularization" as previously, is excessive as you say and even quite incorrect from the initiatory point of view.

Fÿ Maridort sent me, with a letter which arrived at the same time as yours, the work of Fÿ Mercier; I have not yet had time to examine it in sufficient depth, but it seems to me that there are things there which are not entirely settled, and that the fact of taking as a basis certain particularities of the French rite has caused some confusion, or more exactly some inversions in the symbolic correspondences...

I think you must by now have received my letter of August 16; on the subject of the exoteric question dealt with in your letter to Clavelle, your argument seems to me just; the only point of which it would be necessary to be able to be sure for all doubt to be removed is this: has the "regularization" effected by the intervention of the Orthodox bishops now extended to the whole of the Anglican Church? On the other hand, it is true that the use of a vulgar language seems a little awkward; but, as you say, there is the fact that the Orthodox Church, in addition to the various truly liturgical languages and recognized as such since ancient times, also admits some others which are quite unexpected!

Thank you for the representation of the Siberian shaman; there is no doubt that it bears a quite striking resemblance to that of the prehistoric "sorcerer" and "the dance of the deer". -- The Hopis are one of the fractions of the Pueblo Indians, and it seems that it is the one that has best preserved certain traditions.

I come back to the instrument intended to imitate the sound of thunder: the fact that, among certain peoples, such an instrument is carefully hidden from women, apart from what you say about it and which is certainly also justified, seems to me to be in relation to the essentially masculine character which is everywhere and always attributed to the symbols of lightning, the vajra and its various equivalents. On this subject, you could also see the curious Chinese legend of Yu the Great and his wife (in Granet, "Dances and legends of ancient China"); here, the instrument used is a stone drum. - - As for the barrel in question, the more I think about it, the more I find similarities which still tend to show that it actually has much more importance than one might think at first sight. In certain Indian tribes, to cause rain, a man climbs onto a roof (like the roofer in the old LLÿ. operatives) and shakes the calabash filled with pebbles; there is therefore something there that is directly related to the rites of the "rainmakers" or so-called such. Now the true meaning of these rites, as I have indicated, is an appeal intended to bring about the descent of spiritual influences from Heaven to Earth; in the maçÿ initiation, the answer to this call is given, during the consecration, by the mallet, equivalent to vajra, and the flaming sword, which has among its different meanings that of lightning; the concordance between the call and the response therefore seems as clear as possible. We are far away with all that, unfortunate "foley discs"; it would perhaps be interesting for you to communicate these remarks to our FFÿ of the GT..., for whom they could be the starting point for further developments. For the Ob.. in general, it goes without saying that it would be useless to mention considerations of this kind, which would doubtless hardly be understood, and which suffice, to justify the reestablishment of the pebble barrel in the ritual, to assert the fact that it was in use in the past. I would add that it seems to me that this instrument

should normally have its place in the West, this corresponding to the Earth from which the call to spiritual influences is addressed, while the East, from which comes the answer to this call, corresponds to Heaven (c This is why it must regularly have a semi-circular shape, not included in the dimensions of the "long square", and equivalent, in the layout in the horizontal plane, to the dome surmounting a building with a square base). -- On the rites of the rain and the storm, and in particular in connection with the oracle of Dodone and with the "perron" of the fountain of Barenton, there is interesting information in a book entitled "Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance", by Charles Bertrame Lewis (Oxford University Press, 1932); but I don't know if it can be found in France in some library.

The name of the Zamzumim of the Bible is generally interpreted to mean men who speak an unintelligible language, which would in effect make it an equivalent of the word "ml̥ichchha" in Sanskrit; but it is curious that they are spoken of as a people of giants. As a curiosity, do you know that there exists in America an "Order of the Zamzumim", which is moreover only one of the innumerable pseudo-initiatory organizations whose forms are more or less imitated from those of the Maç ..? -- Now, the name in question is considered to be of Arabic origin, and it does have, as you have supposed, the same derivation as that of the well of Zumzum; this one is located inside the very enclosure which surrounds the Kaabah, and it is said to have sprung up when Ishmael was about to die of thirst in this place which was then only a desert. I drank water from Zunzun myself; it has a very particular taste that is difficult to define (I can't find anything to compare it to, except perhaps that of the liquid found in fresh coconuts), and, although it is unmistakably charged with a special "barakah" which notably has healing power in some cases, one certainly could not drink large quantities of it at once. The name Zemzem has a sense of "whispering" or "buzzing" and it may of course refer to the sound of water gushing out abundantly (this is how it is most usually explained); but it is true that, as Br. Maridort told you, it also designates the roar of thunder, which is perhaps more interesting in relation to the question that concerns us, and which could bring us back, in a rather singular and unexpected way, to something comparable to the fountain of Barenton. It is perhaps not very easy to explain completely, especially since the memory of certain things has been lost for a long time, but we must also think, in this respect, of the symbolic correspondences of the "black stone" which is very close to there... --On this subject again, it is understood that the "step" of Barenton was, according to the old meaning of the word, a block of stone, and not, as I have seen seriously explained in I don't remember which book, a staircase giving access to the entrance of a castle!

There is something in all of this which obviously not only relates to a truly universal symbolism (like that of which Mircea Eliade spoke in his article on Shamanism which I reported on in the July-August issue of "ET" ), but which also, and thereby, touches more particularly on what could be called the "prehistoric" origins (or attachments if you prefer) of Maç. Only, one can hardly speak of these things to the generality of present-day Masons,

who, especially if they are still as influenced by current ethnological and sociological theories as many were in my time, would probably imagine that, by making such comparisons, we simply want to assimilate them to "sorcerers"!

I re-read your two works attentively, and I did not find much to rectify; there only seems to me to be a small inaccuracy, moreover on a purely historical point: according to all that I have always seen, it is not in Scotland as you say, but in Ireland, that the Culdean Church would have lasted the longest. According to Eugène Beauvois, the Culdean monks of Ireland would have founded establishments in North America, as well as the Templars; I don't really know what to think of it, having never had the opportunity to see his works myself, but it seems that it would be based on serious reasons.

About the rooster, I do not know the two engravings of Dürer which you mention; could you give me an idea of what they represent? -- I can't read exactly what in Shintoism is symbolized by a rooster on a drum; I think I read "world peace", but that doesn't seem to relate to the context, and I can't quite explain this symbolism, which I had never heard of. -- Now, as regards the assimilation of the rooster to a figure of hermetic mercury, the general objection which could be made is this: it is generally considered that, in the cabinet of reflection, sulfur and salt appear alone, because this is a state of isolation from the environment to which mercury corresponds; if so, how can the presence of the rooster be justified, unless in this case it has another meaning? I am only pointing out this difficulty to you, and you will tell me how you think it could be solved.

In what you say about the apron, I saw another justification for the connection you made between the cord of this one and the cable-tow; it would then be necessary, so that the thing is completely exact, that this cord makes twice the circumference of the size, as F.. Mercier, on his side, pointed out it very rightly.

Regarding the letter of S taking the place of the Hebrew, it seems that this confusion of form has been made quite often, and it is all the more singular in that it actually gives a quite opposite meaning, since 'and I represent unity, while S normally represents multiplicity. In the Scottish rank of Knight of the Sun, the three 's in a triangle thus became three S's, which, to find a plausible explanation for them, were interpreted as "Science, Wisdom, Holiness". I don't know if you can still see, along the facade of the T.. in the rue Froidevaux, the three iron S's that used to be there; I have always wondered if those who had them placed there had not, more or less consciously, had some symbolic intention of the same kind.

The altar of Delos was shaped like a cube, but was it really a cubic stone? according to some, it was formed from an accumulation of ox horns; this would also explain why it was possible to double it without destroying it, that is to say not by substituting for the old stone a new one which should have been the double volume, but simply by adding other horns to those that were already there until the volume is doubled, while keeping the same cubic shape. THE

The symbolism of the horns is here more particularly related to Apollo Karneios, whom the Christianized Bretons assimilated to Saint Cornelius, who for this reason became the protector of horned beasts.

All the same, I must stop there, because it seems that this letter does not want to end!

Good fratry to you.

RG

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***René Guénon to Martinez Espinosa (1)***

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Cairo, August 24, 1930

Sir, You

must have thought that I would not reply to your letter, which reached me in Paris about a year ago. The truth is that I was very ill at that time, and since then various trips and occupations of all kinds have always caused me to postpone all correspondence which was not absolutely urgent. Time passes very quickly, and we never manage to do everything we would like. I am taking advantage of the fact that I am more or less stable here at the moment to finally write to you, asking you to excuse this excessively long delay. I want to tell you at least how pleasant it was to know how much interest you took in reading my books. Obviously, the point of view you take is quite special and cannot be exactly mine, but I am happy to see that it has not prevented you from getting rid of the anti-Oriental prejudice that, according to you -even, you had everything first. I hope that many others in the West will be in the same situation and come to an understanding of the ancient doctrines of the East.

You speak to me of M. Maritain; personally, I have always had friendly relations with him; as for the ideas, we mostly agree on a negative point of view, I mean in the "anti-modern" sense. For the rest, he too, unfortunately, is full of prejudices against the Orient; at least he was, for it seems that his prejudices have been lessened for some time; but, strangely enough, there is in him a kind of fear of what he does not know, and this is regrettable, because it prevents him from broadening his point of view.

I allow myself to point out to you, since you read all my books, that since "The Crisis of the Modern World", there is another, "Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power", which appeared last year. At the moment, I am preparing a volume on "The Symbolism of the Cross", which will no doubt appear towards the end of this year.

Excuse the brevity of my letter; I would like to finally bring my correspondence more or less up to date.

Please accept, Sir, the expression of my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

Poste restante, central office,  
Cairo (Egypt)

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1 — Martinez Espinosa was a Catholic writer from Cordoba, Argentina's second city, to whom we owe the first article on René Guénon published in that country. These two letters are part of a larger correspondence, which the widow of Martinez Espinosa had entrusted to a Dominican: Bro. Mario Pinto, himself a reader and admirer of the French "traditionalist". (Note by André Coyne)

Cairo, February 23, 1934.

Sir, I

apologize for having delayed so long, this time again, in replying to your letter, which I had the pleasure of receiving after such a long silence; but I was quite seriously ill with great fatigue of eyesight, and your letter came to me just during that time, so that I could not even read it until after quite a while. The amount of things of all kinds that have accumulated while I was thus unable to work is such that since then I have not yet managed to come out of it and make up for this lost time.

I thank you for everything you want to tell me about my work; and I think that indeed we can be in good agreement, at least, with regard to the current state of the world and the need for a return to tradition and spirituality, if it is still possible for the West, to the point where things have reached at present. Although, living far from Europe, I may not be able to fully appreciate certain tendencies, I must confess that I do not have excessive confidence in a "revival" which, from what I know, remains so far rather superficial and rather chaotic: there are above all, with rare exceptions, vague and ill-defined aspirations, and it is very difficult to say what will come out of them. But what is certain is that it is fairly generally observed that people are no longer so satisfied with their modern "civilization", and that they are beginning to doubt the so-called "progress": however negative it may be, it is already something...

As for the questions you raise in your letter, allow me to tell you very frankly that these difficulties seem to me to stem above all from the fact that you do not make a clear enough distinction between the religious point of view, on the one hand, and the from a metaphysical and initiatory point of view on the other hand; whatever their relations may be in certain respects, they must never be confused or mixed up, for they refer to totally different domains, and cannot therefore interfere with each other. All that you state as religious truths belongs to what Hindu doctrine calls "non-supreme" knowledge; it suffices to situate each thing in its place and in its order so that there is no possible conflict. Above all, it should not be forgotten that mysticism belongs entirely to the religious domain; there is therefore no possible comparison between mysticism and metaphysics. The two paths, apart from the extremely clear differences in their modalities, are, in reality, not made to achieve the same end; and "mystical union" is not "jivan-mukti", any more than "salvation" is "Deliverance". All that is religious, including mysticism, concerns individual possibilities, in the indefinite extension of which they are susceptible, and does not go beyond them; this is moreover its *raison d'être*, just as that of metaphysical realization is, on the contrary, to go beyond; and that is why one can serve as a basis for the other. It was thus in the Christian esotericism of the Middle Ages, it is always thus in the Islamic esotericism; and, from this, I will quote you this aphorism which seems to me to suit perfectly what it is about: "As long as a man desires Paradise or fears Hell, he cannot claim the least degree

of initiation".

I must also call your attention to the fact that the religious point of view is necessarily linked to certain historical contingencies, while the metaphysical point of view refers exclusively to the principled order. If you speak of "multiple avatars", it is because you are standing in the domain of appearances; but, in absolute reality, they are "the same"; the Christ-principle is not many, whatever may be its earthly or other manifestations. The "Mediator", according to all traditions, is the "Universal Man", who is also Christ; by whatever name it is called, that does not change anything, and I do not see what difficulty there can be in that.

The "ascetic" way would be, in its order, more comparable to the initiatic way than is mysticism, if only because it implies a method and a positive effort; mysticism, on the other hand, is quite the opposite because of its character of passivity. The ascetic path can therefore be a preparation for a realization of another order, much more than the mystical path, which even appears rather incompatible with it. But I don't think we can say that anything beyond elementary religion is open to everyone; asceticism only suits some, and mysticism some others; as for what is beyond the religious domain, it goes without saying that this is still addressed to a much smaller number. He who finds his satisfaction at a certain level would be most wrong in wanting to go beyond it; there is here a question of necessary hierarchy, against which all the sophisms of democratic egalitarianism can do nothing, with which many Catholics even are unfortunately penetrated today, even perhaps among those who least suspect it.

As regards your objection relating to the predominance of pure intellectuality, is it sure that this is what is targeted? Here again, an essential distinction must be made: the texts you cite are against profane knowledge, not against sacred knowledge; and let us not confuse what is simply rational with what is purely intellectual. When I say profane knowledge, I include, of course, all that is philosophy; the less one's mind is encumbered with all these things, the better, most certainly, and from the initiatic point of view even more than from the religious point of view. It would perhaps even be necessary to add a good part of theology to it, insofar as the latter contains many useless and still quasi-philosophical subtleties; in any case, all that is discussion and controversy is clearly profane in spirit. That said, it must be added that pure intellectuality also escapes the religious domain; this is something else, and it goes without saying that feeling and action have their part in it; there again you have to put each thing in the place that suits it, without allowing it to encroach on a domain that is not its own. Finally, pure intellectuality is as indifferent to pride as to humility, these two opposites being equally of a sentimental order; those who claim otherwise show clearly that they have no idea what intellectuality really is.

I see that you properly appreciate Fr. Allo's incomprehension; it would certainly be difficult to find a more limited mind than that; and, really, what a fine way to defend Christianity than to persist in denying that its

doctrine contains a meaning superior to the moral and social platitudes that we commonly see in it! I do not see how all this "down-to-earth" would require the intervention of a supra-human principle; fortunately, for my part, I have a better idea of Christianity than he does... It is sad to see that people of this sort try to sully all that is beyond them; but they are for their trouble: the Truth is too lofty to receive the least attack from it.

Believe, I beg you, Sir, in my best and most distinguished sentiments.

RG

Poste restante, central office

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**René Guénon to Mme Nacht (1)**

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Cairo, June 26, 1947

Madam,

[...] As for the question you ask about an initiatory organization, I can of course only fully approve of your intentions; but unfortunately that is very difficult to find in our time, at least in Europe itself, and especially when it comes to the even more restricted possibility of female initiation [... ] Besides, you are not the the only one to ask this question, far from it, especially since the publication of my *Insights into Initiation* ; I was even surprised, I must say, at the proportion of the number of women among the people who write to me on this subject. I have already spoken of your case, as well as several others, and I will see what it will be possible to do in this respect; be sure that, if any serious possibility arises, I will not fail to inform you of it. In the meantime, I cannot urge you too strongly to distrust all the groups of which you may come to know; most of them have absolutely no value from the initiatic point of view, and there are even some which are even worse and in which very suspicious influences operate [... ]

Rene Guenon

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**René Guénon to Mrs. Guerreiro (1)**

Cairo, March 29, 1950

Dear Madam,

It is already a long time since I received your letter, and I apologize for not having been able to reply to it sooner; I always have so many things to do that it is more and more difficult for me to keep my correspondence more or less up to date... I thank you first of all for your good wishes; I hardly dare to send you mine again, they will be so out of season now!

I understand that you were somewhat discouraged about the Ch. du P. (2); you are not the only one to have encountered this obstacle of which you speak, and others also had to finally give it up. Of course, Mr. C has absolutely nothing to do with it, and even, deep down, I believe that it is no one's fault, but rather only that of unfavorable circumstances; he wrote to me recently that, in his opinion, one can hardly say that this still represents an initiatic possibility. It is certainly very regrettable, but unfortunately I do not see at all what we could do to remedy this situation [...]

Rene Guenon

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1 —. *Same*.

2 — Knights of the Paraclete

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**René Guénon to Noelle Maurice-Denis**  
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Blois, August 12, 1917

Dear Miss, It has already

been eight days since I received my manuscript and your letter. I ask you, in turn, to excuse me for having taken so long to thank you at all and to answer your objections which I accept, believe it well, with great pleasure. Only, the praise with which you accompany them may not be entirely justified, for my only merit is that I have tried to lay these things out as clearly as they are likely to, and I am not sure have always been completely successful. As for the conceptions themselves, it is understood that I have no claim to present them as my own, all the more so since that would be to deprive them of all metaphysical value, as with everything that pertains to the individual order.

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On the first point that you point out to me, I entirely agree with you.

In speaking of the "minimum of determination which is required to render conceivable to us" the Infinite or the universal All, I naturally have in view only our conception currently determined by the conditions of our state of existence (or of any other state similar to this one).

Moreover, I add: "to make it conceivable to us, and above all expressible to some degree", and there can be no question of expression except in relation to a manifested, that is to say conditioned, state. Nothing is inconceivable in itself, nor unknowable, and you are quite right to say that universal Knowledge is identical to the Infinite itself. So you see that I am very far from the Plotinian conception, and moreover you must have thought so, admitting however that, for Plotinus, Intelligence is really only a limited emanation from the Infinite. If this is so, it is an obvious deformation of oriental conceptions, to which the Greek mind, even among the Alexandrians, was never able to adapt itself perfectly; for the Orientals, in fact, Knowledge is very much identical to the Infinite, and here in particular is a text which is very clear in this respect: "Brahma is Truth, Knowledge, the Infinite" (I completely translate literally).

I am thinking of the second point, that which concerns the word "to be", and I must tell you first of all that the reason which prevents me from using this word in a completely universal way is not the reason historical of which you speak, because I do not believe that it is correct to say that he first designated existence. Here is why: there are two distinct roots in Sanskrit, AS and BHU, of which the first, which is the origin of the word "being", designates pure (being), while the second properly designates existence with all the limiting ideas attached to it, and in particular the ideas of origin or production, formation, etc. The opposition of these two roots proceeds from that of the two notions of essence and substance in the sense that I understand them, and it contains an indication for resolving, from a purely metaphysical point of view, the question of the relations between essence and existence, which, like many others, is greatly simplified when one is willing to consent to consider it exclusively in this way, which will not prevent us from subsequently making all the applications one wishes.

I therefore grant you that what designates the word "to be" has been, from the beginning, of a universal order, although this etymological question is doubtless of secondary importance; but, in any case, that does not mean that it is what is most universal, nor that those who wanted to limit the object of metaphysics to being did not do so because their intellectual horizon did not extend beyond a certain conception. We must not forget that, despite everything, Aristotle was Greek; it is possible that others later extended the meaning of the word "to be" far beyond what Aristotle had conceived, but don't you think there are some disadvantages in extending it too much? First, it can make believe in an identity in the thought, whereas the identity is really only in the words; then, to designate everything that goes beyond being as I understand it, I find it much preferable to use a term in the negative form. On the other hand, the confusion between "non-being" and "nothingness" cannot occur, once care has been taken to specify that non-being is included in Possibility, while nothingness is not. something other than the impossible. I therefore cannot agree that the opposition to be # nothing is identical to the possible opposition # impossible: the last two terms are indeed identical, but the first two are not; and even one cannot strictly say that it is to being, but only to the possible, that nothingness is opposed, or rather that it would be opposed if it could really enter as a term in any opposition whatever.

Dismissing any possibility of confusion between "non-being" and "nothingness", I do not really see what are the reasons that can still prevent accepting this term "non-being", or rather I hardly see any only one: its use by Hegel; but isn't it giving much too much importance to Hegel and his system to stop there?. On the other hand, this term has for it its metaphysical use among the Orientals, and above all the extremely important traditional use which is made of it in Taoism. This is perhaps a reason which would not have an equal value for everyone, but it has a lot for me; in any case, it would be completely ridiculous to compare, from this point of view as from any other, with the authority of a purely metaphysical and impersonal Tradition, the pseudo-metaphysical inventions of a Hegel or of any other individuality.

I find that by using the word as you do, you seem to limit your thought more than it really is; this is a consequence of the disadvantages that I find in this word, and that I pointed out to you above. The definition of metaphysics as being exclusively the "knowledge of being" characterizes a certain mode of thought, which is essentially distinguished from that for which ontology is, on the contrary, only a branch of metaphysics, and not the more important; there is even there the expression of one of the most profound differences between the Western spirit and the Eastern spirit. That's why I can't say that it's just a question of words; it is something much more serious in reality, as I have repeated many times to our friend Germain, who made me almost the same objections as you on this subject. Even if we divert the word "to be" from its proper meaning to make it more universal, it remains nonetheless as the mark of a Greek influence exerted, or having been exerted at least originally, on the thought of those who employ it thus; and it was perhaps this influence which prevented scholasticism from being an expression of integral metaphysics.

As for replacing "being" by "existence" that is not possible for me, because on the one hand, I also need the word "existence" while preserving its proper meaning, even less universal than that of "being", and, on the other hand, if being is the principle of existence, it cannot be identified with existence itself. It is true that I wrote that "everything possible has its own existence as such", but that, as you say, is only a simple way of speaking, and it is even a way of speaking that I find, on reflection, too defective, and that I had already thought of changing. One could, for example, put "reality" instead of "existence", which would have the advantage of bringing out the metaphysical non-value of any distinction whatsoever between the possible and the real. Only, you would then reproach me for distinguishing "being" and "real", or rather for extending the real beyond being; but this is of little importance basically, because I only bring in this word "real" because of this alleged distinction commonly made between the possible and the real, and to affirm that such a distinction has no metaphysical meaning. no reason to be; without that, I would very willingly refrain from using this word, to which I do not believe that one can attach a very clear and very precise meaning, contrary to what takes place for words such as "to be" and "existence".

What I find more important is the danger you see in depriving yourself in metaphysics of using the principle of identity and even the verb to be. First, for the verb to be, I believe that it can be used perfectly, and even that it is not possible to do otherwise, given the very constitution of language; only, we must be very careful to notice that, for everything that goes beyond being, this verb can have no other role than that of a simple, purely symbolic copula. For the principle of identity, the question is a little more complicated, and here is how it can be considered: from the logical point of view, it is necessary to consider the principles of identity and contradiction (I do not say, as is often done, the principle of identity or contradiction) as the application, to the conditions of human understanding, of the corresponding ontological principles; but, from a purely metaphysical point of view, the consideration of the latter is insufficient, precisely because they are exclusively ontological principles. The principle of contradiction, in its ordinary form, is in some way the negative or inverse aspect of the principle of identity, and, as such, it is derived from the latter, which is applicable only to being. (the true ontological form of the principle of identity being: "being is being", the form in which it gives rise to interesting developments which I will be able to speak to you about another time). But the absence of internal contradictions (the addition of this word is necessary to set aside the anti-metaphysical distinction between the possible and the compossible) does not only define the logical possibility, nor even the ontological possibility, but also the metaphysical possibility in all its universality. We therefore think for "possible = non-contradictory", and we can speak in this sense of a "principle of non-contradiction", of a completely universal scope, and in a negative form like any expression of what is extends beyond being; in the domain of being, this principle, taking a positive form, will become the p The inverse aspect of the same universal principle will be "contradictory = impossible"; it is this which, in the domain of being, will become the ordinary principle of contradiction. I have just used the equal sign here as a symbolic copula, although

that it is not at all a question of a quantitative equality as in its usual use; I could just as well have used the verb "to be" in the same way; in any case, I hope that you will find this point sufficiently clarified by these few explanations.

I will add this further: It would not be enough, as you say, to "distinguish the different ways of being (or forms of reality) from existence as we experience it" because the latter does not constitute only one mode of universal existence, which also includes an indefiniteness of other modes, which are precisely all these ways of being of which you speak. It therefore remains to consider everything that goes beyond existence, starting with the very principle of this existence, which is being as I understand it, and then everything else, that is to say all the possibilities that this being does not understand. Note well, moreover, that the idea of being is no less analogical for me than for you: being goes beyond all genres, because it is of a universal order, without being for that what there is something more universal; it is the ground of existence and of all that belongs to the domain of existence in all its states, but it is really not possible to go further without diverting the idea of being from its meaning legit. We have, moreover, too few metaphysical terms at our disposal to deprive ourselves voluntarily, by attributing to it another meaning, of that which most properly designates the principle of existence.

I come now to another group of questions, those which you point out to me in the last part of your letter. By saying that "every possibility which is a possibility of manifestation must manifest itself thereby", I do not mean, as you seem to think, that this necessity of manifestation affects the possibilities in question, but that it is inherent to them, that it is constitutive of their nature. I do not quite see how this would resemble Leibnitz's conception, for which, moreover, the possible (all the possible without exception) "tend to exist" (he does not say "begin to exist") which excludes from this conception all the possibilities of non-manifestation. If we can say that manifestation is a necessary result of the Infinite, which basically means simply that it is included in the universal Possibility, it does not follow that it necessitates the Infinite. because, as you yourself say a little further on, "there is no reciprocal", and also because the Infinite cannot be constituted by the addition of all the possibilities; metaphysically, one can only go from the principle to the consequences, and not go back from the consequences to the principle (except as an auxiliary and transitory means of conception). You are right to say that manifestation must be contingent as such, and necessary in principle; but it does not require its principle for that, any more than the effect requires its cause; this analogy seems to me much more exact than that of the agent and the final cause. The error that we have, in this question, is to attribute to the manifestation much more importance than it really has; what must be said is that this importance is strictly zero with regard to the Infinite. To take a comparison, quite imperfect no doubt, but which can make the thing clearer, a point situated in space is equal to zero with respect to this space; that does not mean that this point is absolutely nothing, but it is nothing in relation to extent, it is strictly a zero of extent; manifestation is nothing more than

all the rest, only what this point is in relation to the space considered in all its extension. And note well that it is a question here of the integrality of the universal manifestation, of which one can thus understand the contingency; and this contingency in no way excludes necessity in the sense that I indicated to you just now; opposition between necessity and contingency, in their ordinary meaning, is no longer applicable, and the possibility of going beyond this opposition is one of the reasons which takes away much of its interest from the question of freedom as such. commonly asked. The texts of Cajetan that you quote to me seem to me in fact quite satisfactory in this respect; in any case, they show clearly the part which belongs, in certain difficulties, to the imperfections of expression.

In short, the opposition "necessity-contingency of the world" seems to me to have more importance from the theological point of view than from the pure metaphysical point of view, and even, from the latter, one can say that it does not exist. more. Only, when we go beyond this opposition, it is indeed only from the metaphysical point of view that we place ourselves, and no longer from the theological point of view, and then the questions are no longer posed in the same terms; the very use of the term "creation" is no longer justified. By separating the questions in this way according to the points of view to which they refer (and which correspond to so many different modes of thought), it seems to me that we greatly contribute to avoiding useless complications, which generally result from confusion between these points of view (the history of the so-called "ontological argument" provides us with one of the most striking examples). As for the phobia of pantheism, I believe that it would be enough to dissipate it with this very simple remark, that pantheism, if we want to take this word in a reasonable sense (instead of applying it indiscriminately to almost everything that we detest), is a doctrine which places the absolute in becoming, therefore an essentially naturalistic doctrine, and, by that very fact, antimetaphysical.

I would be very happy to know what you think of the various considerations that I have just explained to you, perhaps a little too long, and also to know the continuation of the reflections that my work has suggested to you, if you will kindly communicate them to me. when you have a few moments.

We received a letter from Germain before our departure from Paris; I answered him from here, and since that time we have had no further news from him; do you know if he is now in Ligny?.

I still haven't received anything for my speech, neither the proofs, nor the "Municipal Bulletin"; since it appeared, I would be curious to know if the text is complete, and also if it is not distorted by a few printing errors; in the latter case, I would not hesitate to have a correction inserted..... Thank you for the offer you have so kindly made me to send me your copy, but, if you have only one 'one, I would be sorry to deprive you of it; if, on the contrary, you can get another one, I accept with great pleasure, especially since it will amuse me to read Lebey's answer again..... It must contain many subtleties that may have escaped me , and that's a shame !.

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These ladies send me their best regards for you and Mademoiselle your sister, and I beg you both to accept the expression of my respectful sentiments.

RG

The Portal, by Champigny-sur-Veude (Indre et Loire),  
September 13, 1917.

Dear Miss,

Not knowing if you are still in Perros-Guirec; I am sending you this letter to Saint-Germain, thinking that we will have her followed if necessary.

First of all, thank you for sending the College's "Municipal Bulletin", I haven't received a single copy; maybe I'll still have a few at the start of the school year, but that's not for sure, and, in any case, I think that they could well have sent me some.

Germain wrote to me these days to announce his return to Paris and give me his new address. We will return ourselves in a fortnight; we will leave here next Tuesday and we will stop for a few more days in Blois, where we always have a lot to do. During these last times, we have been in almost continual movements; that is why it was not possible for me to answer you more promptly.

I'm glad you found what I told you about being clear enough; moreover, I am completely convinced that we must be in agreement, basically, for everything that relates to being. There remains what is beyond being, call it what you will; There is no disagreement on this either, but in reality there is an absence of any doctrine on the Western side. - Germain, like you, is always embarrassed by the term "non-being" and he objected to me recently, against the necessity of using the negative form, that the words "Perfection", "Everything", "Universal possibility", have nothing negative, and yet are applicable beyond being. I answered him by pointing out to him that, in any case, the negative form remains nonetheless necessary when one wants to designate what is beyond being to the exclusion of being, what is precisely the meaning of "non-being". Besides, I think I notice that you accept the negative form more willingly than Germain does; what rather displeases you is undoubtedly the use of the verb "to be" with regard to "non-being"; but it seems to me, however, that it is enough to have understood that this is only a defect of expression, which is simply due to the constitution of language, and which this makes inevitable; we must attack grammar and perhaps logic, but not metaphysics, which in itself is and remains essentially independent of all expression. - Finally, we will be able to talk about all this again in some time, as well as the principle of identity and the so-called "ontological proof" which is only a misunderstood application of it. Perhaps you are right to trace this misunderstanding further back than Descartes; I would not be sorry to have some details on the way in which the thing was presented by Saint Anselm.

As far as the relations between metaphysics and logic are concerned, we are indeed forced to "go beyond logic", in metaphysics, by the very reason of the universality of the latter, which cannot be conditioned by anything relative; and logic is indeed something relative because, if it envisages certain principles of a universal order, it is not in themselves that it envisages them (this concerns only metaphysics), but only in their application to special conditions of human understanding

(conditions which, of course, are individual). In short, the relations of metaphysics and logic correspond to those of the intellect and reason, that is to say, basically, of the universal and the individual.

I pass to another point which, for me, is particularly important: it is the way in which one must understand the possibility of an agreement between the different traditions. This agreement should in no way entail a substitution of one Tradition for another, nor even a fusion which, externally at least, would be neither possible nor desirable. It could only be a fusion conceived in a completely different way, as operating from within and from above; but this is a question of another order, on which it is rather difficult to explain oneself clearly, and which we are moreover very far from being able to consider in a useful way at the present time. In any case, I don't think it's necessary, in general, to speak Sanskrit or Chinese, which would be, not "revolutionary" as you say, but rather "reactionary"... , but which might not be the best way to make yourself understood. However, Germain urged me quite often to purely and simply keep the Sanskrit terms while explaining them; it is true that it is very difficult and often even impossible to find genuine equivalents for them, but I think that the terminology must above all be simplified as much as possible. For me, one of the faults of scholasticism is its overly complicated terminology, especially when this complication does not produce sufficient precision, and this happens in many cases, as is proved by too many discussions which are far from clarifying the questions as much as should; and we would elucidate them without difficulty if we consented to keep always within the purely metaphysical domain, instead of introducing a host of extraneous considerations, which we could moreover find again when we come to applications, theological, cosmological or other. . - As what matters above all, with regard to Eastern doctrines, is to make their spirit understood, it is rather a question of adapting them than of transcribing them, given that this transcription would risk being unintelligible .

There is a great interest, on the other hand, in marking the concordance between the different traditional doctrines whenever the occasion arises; but, in doing this, it must never be forgotten that there is in the West, at the present time at least, no tradition which has a purely metaphysical character, nor indeed which is metaphysically complete; the first of these two faults seems above all attributable to the heritage of the Judaic mentality, the second to that of the Greek mentality. If I say "currently", it is because we could perhaps consider things differently if it were possible for us to know better all that existed in the Middle Ages, and of which, unfortunately, the so-called Renaissance has not nothing left standing; I have no doubt that there was then a much less external traditional teaching than what all the writings that have come down to us contain.

I come back to your objections and first of all to what concerns the necessity of the manifestation: it is understood that the manifestation, as such, is transitory, but it is nonetheless implied in a permanent mode. by the possibilities that comprise it, since these possibilities are themselves absolutely permanent; and it is necessary that everything finds itself in principle in such a permanence, including the manifestation itself, which, without that, would be purely

illusory. The only difficulty is, when one considers a thing in transitory mode, to know how to make the transposition to consider the same thing in permanent mode, because then all that constitutes the manifestation belongs to the order of the non-manifested. I don't know if I'm making myself understood, because that's much more difficult to explain than to conceive, like everything that concerns the relations of time (or more generally of duration) and eternity. I believe this question might interest you especially as regards its application to the resurrection of bodies; in this particular case too, the body, which is transitory in the domain of manifestation, acquires permanence in another mode, with all the attributions that this implies in a way as well.

As for the relations between the manifested and the non-manifested, a question which is immediately connected with the preceding one, the interpretation given to you by Germain is more than inaccurate; I made the correction by writing to him. The unmanifest includes, on the one hand, what can be called the "unmanifestable", or the possibilities of non-manifestation, and, on the other hand, the "manifestable", that is to say the possibilities of manifestation insofar as they do not manifest themselves. It is obvious that, if the non-manifest is the principle of the manifested, it is not insofar as it includes the non-manifestable, but insofar as it includes the manifestable. What must also be realized is that the manifest does not include any possibility other than those which are included in the non-manifest (or rather than some of these), because it is constituted simply by the possibilities of manifestation insofar as they manifest themselves, while these same possibilities, insofar as they do not manifest themselves, obviously belong to the non-manifested: I do not believe that there can be the slightest difficulty there.

As for the question of the void, I have only treated it, in what you have read, incidentally and in a very incomplete way; I will therefore ask your permission to adjourn the explanations in this regard. Only, even if it were only an "ens rationalis", it would still be true that there is the expression of a possibility there, because everything that we really conceive is obviously possible. I say "everything that we really design", because, of course, it would not be the same with a pseudo-design which would imply a contradiction; in the latter case, we would only be in the presence of an absurdity, that is to say an impossibility. Now this case is precisely that of the spatial vacuum, which is the way in which physicists envisage it; so that's not what it's all about. On the other hand, I will not call abstraction an "ens rationalis", for I strictly reserve the use of this term for the consideration of a quality separately from its subject. But, in the order of the possibilities of non-manifestation, there can be no question either of "abstraction" nor of "entes rationalis"; it was necessary to at least clear up any confusion on this point.

Another thing: one cannot speak strictly of the "essence" of a possible as such, because the possible is beyond the distinction between essence and substance, this distinction being valid only the interior of being, while everything possible, in itself, is beyond being. If we speak of what belongs "essentially" to such a possibility, it is therefore only in a completely symbolic way, as when we attribute an "existence" to possibilities. - About this last way of speaking instead of making it disappear, I added a note to my manuscript, and

your objections have led me to do the same in several other places.

On the other hand, I managed to express, more clearly than I had done, the meaning and the metaphysical scope of "the identity of the possible and the real"; I will communicate this to you.

For the use of the word "virtually", you must remember that I do not take it in the sense of Leibnitz; but neither do I understand it in the other meanings you indicate. For me, "virtually" is mainly opposed to "actually" and its use refers to the point of view of "realization", so that it is difficult to justify it completely when one sticks to the theory alone. .

Some time ago I wrote an explanatory note on this subject, which I moreover had Germain read; I'll show it to you too, but remind me, because I might well forget.

The principle of unity of a being in all its states is indeed, as you take it, the Personality, which belongs to the unmanifest, but has its reflection through all the states, so that it is this reflection which constitutes, in each state, the immediate principle of unity of being. When we pass to the non-manifested, it is quite certain that we can no longer speak properly of "unity", any more than of "being"; it is therefore symbolically, here again, and in order to be able to express oneself, that one continues to speak of a "being". This would no doubt be more intelligible if you had read the manuscript which precedes the one I lent you, and to which I refer quite frequently in the latter. - But it is indeed "a being" that must be said, subject to the preceding reservation, and not "the being one": each being has a state which corresponds to each of the degrees that it is necessary to consider in the universal order, but this in no way excludes the corresponding states in other beings; I see no difficulty there. Moreover, by where could all beings be "one", if not, precisely by where there can no longer be a question of "unity", but only of "non-distinction", which is not not the same thing ? - In the same way, when it is a question of the Infinite or of the universal Possibility, it is not "unity" that must be strictly said, but rather "non-duality"; you may remember that I used this word in my lecture on metaphysics. - To come back to multiple states, you say that an integral individuality comprises an indefiniteness of modalities, which is correct, and of states, which is no longer so; in reality, this integral individuality, in all its extension, constitutes only one state in the total being. The comparison you make about the "beatific vision" seems very interesting to me; if you don't mind, we'll talk about it. As for identification by knowledge, it has a significance that Aristotle himself does not seem to have suspected, and that one can only grasp perfectly by passing from the point of view of theory to that of realization. It is above all the latter (which, moreover, must necessarily influence the theory itself) for which I find no equivalent in any degree in Western doctrines; and yet this is, ultimately, the only thing that matters, although the theory is certainly the indispensable preparation for it.

You are right to say that Zero is the principle of unity in the same sense that Non-Being is the principle of Being, and even it is basically the same thing; on the other hand, if unity is the principle of multiplicity, it is in the same sense that Being is the principle of manifested things. Now those aren't two meanings absolutely

different for the word "principle"; it is rather the same meaning taken at two different degrees, with the appropriate transposition. - I am not saying that unity is relative to multiplicity, any more than the universal Being is relative to particular existences; only, as soon as unity is posited, multiplicity finds itself implied in it in an immediate way, and moreover, if it were not so, there could be no multiplicity. last question: a comparison

can really be established between two beings only in relation to a common element which they both possess, but which they manifest at different degrees of development. On the other hand, for the case you are considering, of a being having the same elements as another, plus some difference that would make it superior to the latter, this case is not feasible, because the The relationship thus established between these two beings would simply be the relationship of a species to a genus, and not the relationship of two species of the same genus. Each species must have a difference, so that if, compared to another species, it has one more character, it also necessarily has one less, and, as one cannot establish equivalence or non-equivalence between these two different characters, I do not see how a comparison bearing precisely on the differences would be possible.

My wife joins me in sending you, Dear Mademoiselle, as well as your family, our very good memory.

RG

.....  
Setif, January 3, 1918.

Dear Miss, When I

received your kind letter last week, I was thinking of writing to you, and I would have done it sooner had it not been for the flu which has made me quite ill, and which I am not even completely rid of yet. We have had a very intense cold these last days: up to minus twelve at night; the temperature seems to be getting warmer, fortunately, but you can see that it's not just in France that we suffer from the rigors of winter.

I don't know if Germain told you what classes I have to do here: in addition to philosophy, I have French in Première and Latin in Première and Seconde, which doesn't amuse me at all. everything, I assure you, especially since the pupils are in general of an extraordinary nonsense, especially in Latin. It is true that, for the examinations, one is less difficult in Algiers than in Paris; and then, as the candidates have, for the most part, very good grades in Arabic, they only need to have 4 or 5 in French and as many in Latin to be accepted. I have very few students in philosophy: only three, plus two in mathematics; those aren't doing badly, they've even gotten to it faster than often happens. There are far more students in the Première and the Seconde, unfortunately, and correcting their homework takes a lot of my time, so so far I haven't been able to work for myself yet. I don't even know how I would do if I didn't have my class all prepared in advance. This additional workload is due to the lack of teachers, which is all the more surprising given that the college is large and has nearly 400 students. Consider that only one teacher is obliged to do Latin in Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth,

and then the classes are brought together two by two; under these conditions, there is really no reason to be surprised at the poor results. We live very close to the college, so that I no longer have the fatigue of daily trips, which is appreciable, especially in winter. There is yet another advantage here for me: it is that the position I occupy was permanently vacant, its holder having been appointed to Blidah; I therefore no longer have to fear the same misadventure as last year, whereas, if I had replaced another conscript, he could always have returned at any moment, and then it would have been necessary change again. It's not that we intend to stay here indefinitely; only, we may have to prolong our stay there a little longer than we expected, because I cannot give up a safe post for another which will once again only be temporary.

What troubles us the most here is to feel so far from all our friends; my colleagues are very nice, the Principal too, and relations with them are quite pleasant, but as an intellectual environment, it leaves something to be desired. In general, the people here do little more than trade and business; everything else seems to leave them indifferent: thus, no one ever talks about the war; it's too far and it doesn't affect them enough. We wouldn't know anything if we didn't have the newspapers from France, and even then they only reach us very irregularly, most often after a week. It is especially when we are several days without having mail that we feel our remoteness; and, as the region is certainly one of the least interesting in Algeria in all respects, it would not be very cheerful if it had to last very long. Finally, in the current circumstances, we must still consider ourselves lucky to have no other troubles than these.

We had twelve days of vacation, which ends today; the weather was so bad that we didn't dare venture on a little trip as we had originally intended; and I think we did well, because it seems that there was snow or rain everywhere. Besides, it might not have been very careful with my flu, and all the more so since my aunt was also very tired from the cold; so it will probably be for Easter.

I leave it to my wife to give you other details about the country as you ask her, and I will now try to answer your letter, or rather your two letters, because I do not forget that of September . Germain had written to us that you had been admitted to follow the courses of the faculty of theology, our congratulations. I quite understand your horror of exegesis; as for the study of Hebrew, you do not tell us if it interests you. And your thesis project for the doctorate in philosophy, do you think you will be able to put it into execution soon?

As you must think, the favorable appreciation of Fr. Sertillanges towards me, which you transmit to me, gave me the greatest pleasure; I regret all the more keenly not having been able to meet him when you had so kindly planned to bring us together, but I do hope that the opportunity will arise for a few days. What you tell me interests me all the more because it is not in university circles that I expect to ever find the slightest understanding of metaphysical things.

I also believe that it would be wrong not to attach any metaphysical importance to theology, but that it is necessary to maintain, in spite of that, a very clear separation between the

two areas. Many metaphysical truths are certainly capable of a theological application, but they must then be translated into a completely different language, and this difference is due to that of the points of view adopted.

Also, I think that the best thing, when doing pure metaphysics, is not to worry about possible theological applications, any more than other applications of all kinds, which is far from meaning that these applications are without interest in themselves.

Now, if you find clearer correspondences among theologians than among philosophers, that does not surprise me too much, because, if theology is not and cannot be pure metaphysics, philosophy is often much more still far away. This is perhaps less true of Catholic philosophy than of university philosophy, but yet almost everything that has been written in modern times (I am not speaking here of the Middle Ages) must necessarily feel more or less general mentality.

As for mysticism, I do not despise it so completely as you seem to believe; I do not regard the mystical "realization" as illusory, but only as incomplete, and I very willingly grant you that there is something more here than mere theory. Only, I think that you will recognize, on your side, that this realization differs profoundly from the metaphysical realization, and that in its very principle since it is carried out in passive mode; it is moreover for this reason that it cannot exceed certain limits. For greater precision, I would say that these limits are those of an individual state considered in its entire extension, as for the other states, they can then only be perceived by reflection in some way, and not by a direct and immediate way. A second consequence of the passive character of the mystical realization is its lack of order: very diverse elements are mixed together, resulting in a confusion between the intellectual and the sentimental, a confusion which is moreover inevitable in all time that a certain achievement is not supported by a sufficient theoretical basis. It seems to me, moreover, from what you tell me, that Father Sertillanges recognizes the existence of this confusion, no doubt, one can always extract the intellectual elements which are found there, but what one will thus obtain will thereby have lost its properly mystical character. This may be more interesting for making certain comparisons, but on the condition of having already acquired the desired metaphysical data from elsewhere, because it will be unsafe to undertake metaphysical studies based on the writings of mystics, even the most orthodox; I believe that you will still grant me this last point without too much difficulty.

Now, can we speak of "intellectualist mystics" as you would like?. As what essentially characterizes mysticism as such appears to be the presence of the sentimental element, it seems to me that all that one has the right to say is that there can be found in mysticism reflections of intellectualism; but wouldn't these reflections correspond precisely to the reflection of the higher states that the mystical realization does not reach directly?

As for Spinoza, whom you quote to me on this subject, I do not know to what extent one can call him mystical in the proper sense of this word, but, in any case, I would not agree to regard him as a truly intellectualist. , although it was, in some respects,

further than Cartesian rationalism, thanks to the knowledge he had of the Judaic philosophy of the Middle Ages, and in particular of Maimonides; but it remains to be determined to what extent he understood the latter, who seems to be much superior to him, even though the Jews were never very metaphysicians.

You are right not to want to separate the realization from the theory and to say that it forms an indissoluble whole; in pure metaphysics also, it must be so, but the theory must nevertheless precede any realization, because it alone can furnish the latter with the indispensable basis. In other words, theoretical knowledge is the necessary preparation for effective knowledge, but it can only be that, and this character must influence the way in which the presentation of the theory itself will be presented. I mean that, even if we leave aside everything that is not of an exclusively theoretical order, we will still have to take into account what will thus have to remain "understood"; this is what happens with the use of the words "virtually" and "effectively" which has led us to address this question of realization. I hope you will tell me in your next letter whether you can better conceive the possibility of metaphysical realization, now that I have tried to tell you what distinguishes it from mystical realization. I must also add that the latter is the only thing that one can find in the West when one wants to leave the purely theoretical point of view. And yet, here again, I am tempted to make a restriction: perhaps there was something else in the Middle Ages, but then it is something that we no longer know at all; Was it completely lost, where did some traces of it remain which, in this case, would be well hidden? This is a question which it would be interesting to elucidate, but I believe it is very difficult.

As for "the effort of interior life" you have seen very well that it is not at all what it is about, nor even of anything analogous to that, when one speaks about metaphysical realization. It could not even make sense here, since this realization must precisely go beyond life, as well as all the other limiting conditions which define this or that particular state of existence. Moreover, the mystics themselves already go much further than the domain of psychology, without departing for that from the individual human state, nor, consequently, from life which is one of the conditions of this state. This expression of "inner life" has taken on a very unfortunate meaning with the modernists, a meaning which is not unrelated to that of Bergsonian "intuition"; these are even, at bottom, only diverse expressions of the same tendency.

About what precedes, I note again to return to it another time, that the affirmation of the metaphysical identity of the possible and the real, takes on a much more precise meaning when it is related to the point of view of the "realization", and that it is even this point of view alone that can give it all the significance it should have. I had promised to speak to you also about various other things; you will be very kind to remind me of them at the next opportunity.

I pass on to another point: in distinguishing in the human being the sentimental element and the mental element, it is understood that I only want to speak of what is individual; there can therefore be no question then of the intellectual element properly speaking, which is supra-individual, you object to this that "the individual is

virtually all-knowing"; but we cannot say that, because, if it is true of the human being, it is not as an individual, but, on the contrary, as he attaches to the supra-individual states and that he has the possibility of entering into possession of these states, which constitute with the individual state only one and the same total being. Now, the intellectual element is precisely what binds together all these states of total being; but, that is why it belongs to the domain of none of these states taken in particular; it meets this domain only at one point, which moreover constitutes its true centre. It is only this encounter or this incidence, with the refraction which is its consequence, which can, when it is a question of the human individual state, become conscious; and this is, moreover, a necessary condition for this state to serve as a basis for a realization reaching the supra-individual states.

For the latter, there can no longer be any question of "conscience" in the proper sense of this word; or, if we want to continue to use this term by transposing it into the universal, we must take the greatest care to indicate that we no longer take it in its ordinary and "psychological" sense. I don't know if I make myself understood enough; but, in any case, I do not see why it would be necessary to give the intellectual element another name, at least when one strictly adheres to the metaphysical point of view; it can be otherwise when we want to move from there to this theological "translation" of which I spoke to you previously.

I don't know exactly in what sense you take the idea of "incarnation" when you say that I must regard it as anti-metaphysical; could you give me some details on that? In whatever way it is understood, however, it must be maintained that the intellectual principle is essentially "non-embodied", because of its extra-individual character. A fortiori is it the same with the "personality", of which this intellectual principle is in some way the projection through all the states of being; If you do not yet clearly see the meaning of this term "personality", I would ask you to ask me some precise questions on this subject, and I will endeavor to answer them as best I can.

The notion of "obediential power", the definition of which you indicate to me, seems in fact to be closer to the metaphysical conception of the multiple states of being. Only, isn't it necessary to establish, for this definition, a distinction between the case of human nature and that of angelic nature, the latter not comprising the same possibilities as the former? . The question would undoubtedly deserve to be examined a little more closely. As for the intrinsic non-contradiction, it is a characteristic of all possibility whatever it may be, but it cannot in any degree be regarded as a "limitation", for that would amount to saying that the impossible, which is not nothing, limits the possible, which is everything; to say that the possibilities are "limited" by intrinsic non-contradiction is a language imperfection that would be very difficult to avoid.

For the vocabulary I do not believe that a great complication is so necessary for precision; I even believe that the apparent perfection which it gives to the expression is entirely illusory and does not compensate for the inconveniences which may, on the other hand, result from this complication. Moreover, these questions of vocabulary are in themselves only of rather secondary importance; the main thing is to make yourself understood as well as possible, and that is why I find it necessary to avoid

unnecessary complications; instead of inventing new terms, it is preferable to clearly define the meaning of those used, without worrying too much about the abuse that may have been made of them by others.

I was telling you that I had not yet found the time to work since my arrival here; however, I have read Boutroux's thesis on the "contingency of the laws of nature", and also Bergson's "creative evolution". I find that the first is not worth its reputation, and, as for the second, it has only confirmed the opinion I had of its author; all this is terribly confused, and it is in this above all that one can find useless complications, for substance as well as for form.

You have doubtless learned, like us, of Durkheim's death; do you remember the reflection that Dom Besse had made about him the day of your license exam?. He hadn't been mistaken in saying that he didn't have much time left. If only his disappearance could change something in the spirit of the Sorbonne!.

Let's hope so, but without daring to hope for it too much.

This poor Germain was really unlucky to fall ill just when he had to take his physical exam, we wonder if he will prepare him again for the next session. In any case, the stay in the country and the change of occupations will certainly do him good, but it is very regrettable that he could not be rid this time of a thing which bothers him so much, and which tires him all the more because it is less to his taste.

We were very happy to learn from Germain that your mother's health had greatly improved; we sincerely hope that this improvement will continue and increase further. Please, dear Mademoiselle and friend, accept my best wishes for you and yours on the occasion of this new year, and believe in my respectful sympathy.

RG

I would be delighted to have you as a student for Sanskrit when I return to France; I hope that your projects will not be abandoned by then.

We learned from the newspapers of the death of Léon Bloy. - A few days ago I received a message from M. Milhaud, to whom I had written to announce my change, not having been able to see him before leaving Paris.

Blois, December 8, 1918.

Dear Miss, A few days

ago we received the issue of the "youth review" that you were kind enough to send us, and we learned that you were back at Saint-Germain. Madam your mother she returned from Switzerland with you and how is she now?. - For us, our return from Algeria was accomplished without unfortunate incident, at

least until Paris, where all three of us had the flu almost as soon as we arrived; we were barely able to leave for Blois the day before the start of the school year. After a week and a half, the College was dismissed because of the epidemic, which I was not sorry for, because I badly needed a little rest to complete my

to put back. The definitive return to school did not take place until November 15, but with four sick teachers, so that since that time I have had extra work: French in ninth grade, which is very uninteresting; I hope this doesn't last too long. Normally, I have much less to do here than in Sétif; I therefore hope to have the possibility of working a little for myself, which would be all the more necessary for me since I intend to try the aggregation at the end of the year, even though the program does not is not the most satisfactory. This competition is reserved for professors and delegates who have been in practice for at least two years, which saddens Germain who is not in this situation; maybe he told you about it. We saw him several times during the few days we spent in Paris; he told us when he was appointed to Stanislas to replace Maritain who had asked for a year's leave. I don't know if his new occupations absorb him to the point of making him forget his friends, but since we've been here he hasn't given us the slightest sign of life, so I finally decided to write to him to find out. what it becomes, and I did it today. The preparation of his course seemed to give him some concern, and moreover he must have a fairly large class, a disadvantage which I do not have here.

I was asked to do book reviews for the "philosophical review"; I accepted, although it is not always the most pleasant work. In any case, it would hardly be possible for me, this year again, to undertake anything more serious.

I read your father's article with great interest; although I'm not very good at artistic things, some of the ideas expressed there really appealed to me, even from a different point of view.

So for the distinction between symbol and allegory; I have always made the difference, but without finding the way to express it very clearly; It seems to me that this point should be explored further. On the other hand, the definition of idolatry seems to me quite correct; it would follow this consequence, that idolatry can exist everywhere and always among those who do not understand the symbol, but that no idolatrous doctrine in principle has ever existed, and this is exactly what I myself think in this regard.

In the same issue of the "Revue des jeunes", I noted what is said about a book on "the introduction of scholasticism in secondary education". I even wondered if the author of this book, who signs "Miles Christi", would not have some relationship with Maritain, because Germain showed me the course he gave to Stanislas, and he is entirely scholastic, and even, it seemed to me, a little too difficult to follow for the students of a philosophy class, who generally have no special aptitude for it, and who, moreover, do not have been in no way prepared by the teaching they have received so far. The enterprise therefore seems to me to present many difficulties and perhaps even certain inconveniences; in writing to Germain, I communicate to him some reflections on this subject; moreover, he seemed rather hesitant about what he should do himself for his teaching. In any case, the question is certainly worth discussing. If you are interested, you can, when you see Germain, ask him to share with you what I say to him, as well as the question of the existence of a "philosophy

academic". I ask him his opinion on all this, and would be very happy to have yours as well.

You have no doubt learned of the death of M. Milhaud, which occurred a few days before the liberation of Lille: he will therefore not have been able to see his son again, who had been detained there since the beginning of the war.

We learned with pleasure these days of the election of Fr. Sertillanges to the Institute. I very much regret not having yet been able to make his acquaintance as you had planned, especially after what you wrote to me last year about his appreciation of the metaphysical ideas of which you had spoken to him; let us hope, however, that a favorable opportunity will eventually present itself for a few days.

Have you returned to philosophical work? Can you find the time to take a few classes again? I do hope that you will keep me informed of all this, which always interests me greatly. Nor do I forget that you promised me an answer to what I wrote to you a long time ago.

We are very happy with the unexpected turn of events; no one could have foreseen such a happy and, above all, such a prompt ending. If only all this could bring about some change in the general mentality!... But I'm afraid that we shouldn't count on it too much.

Please be our kind interpreter to all your family, and receive for you, dear Mademoiselle, my respectful compliments, as well as the good friendships of these ladies.

RG

.....  
Blois, December 19, 1918.

Dear Miss, Your letter

crossed with mine and it is with the greatest pleasure that I read this answer that you had promised me for so long, just when I had just reminded you of this promise. .

You find our present situation to be enviable; Certainly, it is better than last year's in many respects and yet, despite my less heavy duty, I don't think I have yet found the time to work as I would like on the things that interest me. Moreover, it would be necessary for that not to have the fatigue of the class, nor all the preoccupations which are attached to it; I end up believing that education, at least secondary education, is completely incompatible with certain personal work.

Germain, to whom I had written at the same time as to you, seems surprised at the friendly reproaches I addressed to him on the subject of his long silence. However, having seen us so suffering in Paris, it seems to me that he could have inquired as to what had happened; but, of course, I have no grudge against him. For the rest, I sincerely pity him for having so many pupils and above all, from what he tells me, so difficult to manage; he too must not now have much leisure and peace of mind. And you yourself, I see that you are not exempt from cares and annoyances of another kind, since your letter has been interrupted.

I completely agree with you when you speak of a decadence, not of mysticism, but of the theory of mysticism, and of the unfortunate influence that

modern philosophy has been able to exert on this branch of theology. This is true especially if you think, as is likely, of certain theologians such as Görrès, who never completely got rid of the Protestant mentality that he owed to his origins. That said, and to get to the bottom of the matter, it seems to me that, while granting you the inaccuracy of certain current interpretations of mystical states, it is still not possible to regard as "mystical" states purely intellectual. If the meaning of the term is extended beyond certain limits, all that I have told you may also apply to it; it is also good to always agree on the definitions, and all the more so since the extension in question is not without leading to certain dangerous confusions. You regard the sentimental element as purely accessory among the mystics; I think on the contrary that its presence constitutes an essential character of the mystical mode of realization. I don't mean it's the end, far from it; only, it is a means proper to this mode, and which distinguishes it precisely from the others, at the same time as it partly explains what is incomplete in the mystical realization. To say that it is incomplete, moreover, is not at all to say that it is negligible or contemptible, far from it; and it is even very fortunate if really, as you assure me, mysticism is not in decline nowadays, for without that there will no longer remain in the West the slightest trace of achievement of any kind. I begin by telling you all this so that you cannot misunderstand my intentions.

On the other hand, it seems to me that when you speak of metaphysics, you always think of theory, separating it from realization, perhaps because you conceive of the latter exclusively in mystical mode. On the contrary, when I speak of metaphysics, I think above all of realization, since theory is only a preparation for it. You deny that this preparation is essential; I agree that it is not necessarily so for a partial realization, but it is no longer the same if one considers the possibility of a complete realization; it is true that you may not yet see very well what I mean by that, because it is obviously difficult to express. This brings me directly to another consideration: you insist a great deal, and with good reason, on the inexpressible character of mystical states; but this is just as true for the purely metaphysical realization, and the theory itself must always reserve the part of this inexpressible which is the essential, leaving the conception open to unlimited possibilities; this is why true metaphysics excludes any expression of systematic form. Now, you say that, "for those who realize, it does not matter to them to express themselves clearly"; I will go even further, and I will say that it is indifferent to them not to express themselves at all. The necessarily inadequate expression has no other interest than to help to conceive certain things; it is an "adjuvant" but nothing more, and that whether it is a question of expression by words or by any symbols whatsoever.

I don't think I ever said that mysticism is "a means of expressing metaphysics"; this could perhaps be said of theology, but that is quite another question. Any realization, even partial, goes beyond expression immensely; and that cannot rightly be called a "lower stage", for it is a realization which is all that it can be, given its point of departure. YOU

recognize yourself that it is not complete, that is to say that it can only go so far as certain limits; but I attribute this to its "irregular" character, if one can so speak, while you see in it a necessity of any realization, whatever it may be; that is, it seems to me, the greatest difference there is between us.

Before dealing with this point more thoroughly, it is still necessary, in order not to miss anything of your letter, that I make a few other observations. You are afraid of lowering religion by recognizing in it a symbolic character; however, can you deny this character for all that, in religion, is a means of expression, whether in the order of dogma or in that of rite? Do not believe that this is a reason to reject the effective power of the rite as the Protestants do, quite the contrary; and the existence of this power, when it is recognized, is precisely one of the best examples to show the role of a symbolic element as a support for any achievement whatsoever. I add that, for me, symbol or expression is basically the same thing, so that the role of theory, in metaphysics, cannot be other than that which I have just indicated, and again with this difference that its effectiveness is not immediate; but what is truly known can never be lost and must sooner or later bring about a corresponding realization.

Another thing still: you say that, in mystical contemplation, "intelligence comes into play in an intuitive and inexpressible mode". For the inexpressible, according to what I have just told you, it is common to all achievements; as for the intuitive character, I should say the same if it really belongs (I mean in the intellectual order) to mystical states. Indeed, is not intellectual intuition what properly and essentially constitutes metaphysics? Without this, it could not be "supra-rational" as it should be; not recognizing this character in it is equivalent for me to denying metaphysics, or, which amounts to the same thing, to attributing this name to something which will in reality only be a pseudo metaphysics. Translation in a rational mode, with all its inevitable imperfections, can only occur in metaphysics for exposition, not for knowledge itself; and it is only in this rational or discursive expression that error risks introducing itself, intuition not being susceptible to it because of its direct and immediate character.

If I made a reservation earlier regarding the role of intellectual intuition in mystical states, it is first of all because its presence is what defines metaphysics as such, and c It is also because I am afraid that you are somewhat confusing this intellectual intuition with the "intellectual vision" of the mystics, especially since I know that many do indeed make this confusion, even among theologians. There are, however, two essentially distinct things here: it must not be forgotten that intellectual vision is a mystical phenomenon, (absolutely arbitrary), a phenomenon which goes far beyond, as you say, all the laws of psychology. (and one is allowed to laugh at psychologists like Delacroix who claim to explain these things); but finally the very use of this word "phenomenon", if we want to give it a meaning (and it seems to me that we must), does it not indicate that it is a question of some what happens in the domain of individuality? And it is the limits of this domain which, for me, mark those

of mystical realization; but it must be clearly understood that I mean here, not of the restricted and fragmentary individuality which is all that is ordinarily considered under this name, but of what I call, in order to distinguish it, extended individuality, with the integral development of all the possibilities which it involves, and which are indefinite (but not infinite). You seem to agree with me when you speak, for the mystic, of "the invasion in him of something which, is not him", and which I cannot interpret as his accession to a supra-individual domain", but only as the action of a supra-individual principle in the individual domain. You will kindly reflect a little on this expression of "mystical phenomenon", and tell me if you find another possible meaning for it; for my part, I do not. In any case, there can obviously be no question of "phenomena" of any kind from the metaphysical point of view; with my interpretation this is explained by the universal character of all that is metaphysical, and, on the other hand, it is perhaps what most clearly marks the profound difference between the two modes of realization, mystical and metaphysical, because, by indicating their respective domains, this shows by and the other can lead; and I thus return to the question of the possibility of a "complete" realization.

December 22: - Me too, I was obliged to interrupt my letter; I'm going to pick it up today where I left off.

You say that "a complete and absolute realization in all respects would suppose the total and effective liberation from all the conditions of human existence". Myself, I don't think I've ever said anything else and I'll even add: not only of human existence, but also of any other mode of individual existence, whatever it may be. We are therefore in complete agreement on this point; only, we are no longer so as to the consequences that should be drawn from it. This comes above all from the fact that you always consider the human being solely as a human being, and, from this point of view, you are certainly right, since the human state is an individual and conditioned state, it is obvious that the being cannot, by remaining in this state, free itself from the conditions which precisely define it, and which, in sum, make up its entire reality, at least when we limit ourselves to considering it in itself. Since you admit that the mystic "is never liberated except partially and virtually", it is therefore that he is never anything other than a human individual; he has, like every individual being, the possibility of being something else, but only the possibility. So I don't see how you can logically think that it reaches a supra-individual domain; it seems to me rather that we should be in complete agreement as regards the mystic: he extends his individuality indefinitely, he can come to realize all the possibilities of which it is capable: but the extended individuality does not remain there. less individuality, with all the limiting conditions that make it what it is.

Now here is the other point of view, the one you haven't considered, the being who in a certain mode of existence is a human individual, (A thing cannot be other than what it is ) (Principle of identity) can also be something else; and it can be so, not only successively, but also simultaneously, and even better, since time, being only one of the special conditions of the state

human individual, does not have to intervene for all that is apart from this state. I do not believe that the expressions before and after, employed in relation to human existence as a whole, are capable of any meaning other than that of a purely logical and causal succession; but a relation of causality, both between different states of existence and within the same state, necessarily supposes a simultaneity. I do not mean to say that there are not, outside of the human state, modes of succession more or less analogous to the temporal mode, and capable of being understood with the latter in the same more general term, such as that of "duration"; but these modes are never, like time itself, but particular conditions, of such and such a state of existence, and, consequently, do not have to intervene either when one places oneself in the universal. , that is to say when one considers the possibilities of the total being, instead of being limited to those of one of its states. And I will add that only then is being considered metaphysically, since the metaphysical point of view is properly the point of view of the universal.

You will certainly not dispute, I believe, that the human being can be something other than what he is as an individual and that, insofar as he is something else, he is no longer subject to the conditions of human existence; in particular, it is no longer subject to time, which is one of these conditions. This amounts to saying that a realization relating to extra-individual states cannot be compelled to occur only after human existence, rather than during or even before (these words being taken here in their ordinary temporal sense, which can only truly apply within human existence). Therefore, the human state can, just as well as any other state of existence, be taken as the basis of such a realization. \_\_\_\_\_

All the difficulty for you therefore seems to me to come only from the fact that you do not place yourselves in what we can call "non-time". I agree that it can sometimes be quite difficult to get rid of the temporal point of view; and yet I believe that you yourself recognize that it must be done, or that without it one would have to renounce all metaphysics. The most difficult thing, in my opinion, is to conceive of the relationships between time and "non-time"; however, it can be done (note that I say design, not imagine).

Now you say that "absolute or total realization, infinite unity, beatific vision cannot be attained in this lifetime". Here again, we are in full agreement, and to think otherwise would be completely contradictory, since it would simply be to think that the universal can be included in the individual, or the unconditioned in the conditioned (life does not being, like time and space, only one of the conditions of individual human existence). So I never meant to say that complete realization was possible "in this world", because by "this world" I can't mean anything other than the set of conditions of our present individuality. Only, by affirming this impossibility, I do not mean either that such a realization must necessarily be postponed until after death, since precisely this after has no longer any meaning in the extra-individual order, the only one of which there is to take into account with regard to this achievement. To suppose this is to suppose that the unconditioned is affected by contingencies relating to the course of human existence, to its beginning and its end.

end (which are beginning and end only from the point of view of individuality, and I would even say of restricted individuality), it is therefore to regard the unconditioned as conditioned, that is to say still to fall back exactly in the same contradiction as before, although in a different way.

Thus, the individual, as an individual, can in no way escape from the conditions which make him such; but the being who is a human individual is also something else at the same time, and it is in this capacity that he can make effective the communication which exists virtually between his human state and his other states (and this for all or part states in question). Whether this result is obtained from the human state or from any other, it is ultimately the same, for the human state must necessarily be found, in the same way as all the others, in the be complete. On the other hand, all beings having rigorously equivalent possibilities in this respect, realization will ultimately have to be attained by all, from one state or another; you see that I go further than you here, and that, for me, it is only from the human point of view that "many (and even all) are called, but few are chosen"; but, from this point of view, it is perfectly true that "few are chosen", that is to say that few actually realize from the human state, either during life or after death. that is to say, to speak in a more metaphysically exact way, either the part of human individuality that earthly existence represents, or in the posthumous extension or prolongation of this same individuality (an extension which moreover can be considered as "perpetual", ie temporally indefinite).

On arriving at this point, a difficulty arises: it would seem, from what I have just told you, that it does not matter that human individuality is taken as the basis of realization rather than any which other state, if the end result should be the same in all cases. ((But it is not so) [text crossed out by the author] Moreover, the human state is only one state among the others and like the others; from the point of view of the universal, if he can in no way be at a disadvantage compared to others, neither can he claim any privilege. However, on the contrary, it is very important that this human state provides the effective basis for realization; but, for the moment, I cannot insist on this, and I will content myself with assuring you that the difficulty which I have just pointed out to you (in order to anticipate an objection which you would certainly have made to me yourself) does not is by no means insoluble, although many precautions are necessary to express its solution more or less properly.

There still remains another side of the question: what becomes of human individuality for the being who has attained complete realization? In a sense, it is as if it did not exist, for all contingency is nothing compared to the universal; but in another sense, it is, in the total being, an element as necessary as all the others (with a mathematical symbolism, one could represent the total being not as an arithmetic sum, but as an integral of all these elements which are its states of existence). In any case, once the being is in an unconditioned state, the conditions of its individual state, no longer being limiting, can only exist for it in an illusory mode; but, as to appearances and in relation to other human individuals, nothing has changed. I don't know if I am

understand very well on this point; it will be up to you to tell me if it is necessary to provide some additional details.

In a certain respect, one could say that metaphysical realization operates in the opposite direction to mystical realization. Indeed, the latter implies the action of a universal principle in the individual domain, an action which can be designated symbolically as a "descent" of this principle (but, of course, without the principle being in any way affected). On the other hand, metaphysical realization can be viewed in some way as a taking possession of higher states, that is to say as an "ascent" of the being realized in these states. Of course "descent" and "ascent" are here only figurative expressions; but it is in short another way of expressing the "active" character of one of the two realizations in relation to the "passive" character of the other. Moreover, the opposition exists only in one respect, as to the means and not as to the ends; complete realization necessarily entails in addition the effects produced by any partial realization.

With regard to the relative opposition that I have just indicated to you, I again particularly note your quotation from the Creed of St. Athanasius: "Non conversione divinitatis in carnem, sed assumptione humanitatis in Deum". We could find there an application, perhaps unexpected for you, concerning the "non-mystical" character of certain states which you nevertheless regard as mystical. This proves once again how necessary it is to know exactly what is meant by "mystical"; it seems to me that, if we exclude someone from the characteristics which seem to me essential to his definition, this word no longer offers any precise meaning, and that, consequently, there would not even be any more interest to keep it, as soon as we want to fit everything into it, is a bit like the case of correlative terms, which can only have meaning in relation to one another.

It is also necessary, in order not to be too incomplete, to mark a difference between the two realizations as regards their respective preparation: theoretical preparation is indispensable to metaphysical realization, but not to mystical realization; you admit it like me. I will only add that this theoretical preparation concerns only what is of the pure metaphysical order, to the exclusion of all that is of the order of relative knowledge (such as properly scientific knowledge), which is here without any importance. On the other hand, there is also a certain preparation which is quite particular to the mystical realization: it is what one could call "moral", if this word did not risk being taken in a rather unfavorable sense; this preparation, the nature of which is closely related to the sentimental element of mysticism, being of the order of human (if not even social) contingencies, could have no effect as regards metaphysical realization. This will no doubt seem a little strange to you, for I fear that you see between the metaphysical point of view and the moral point of view the possibility of a relationship which, for me, cannot exist. I am well aware, on the other hand, that the idea of "charity", of which I am thinking more particularly here, is susceptible of a certain analogical transposition; but could not the same be said of any idea of any order? and, since the intellectual order is the only one which is directly related to the universal, is it not preferable to envisage only, at the starting point, what is purely intellectual, without any mixture of the domain

sentimental?. Moreover, the consequences have nothing that can worry anyone, since, in the results, everything else will also be found as an added bonus.

It also seems (but did I understand you correctly on this point?) that even "moral" preparation does not appear to you to be absolutely indispensable for mystical realization; it will help you to understand that it is completely indifferent to another mode of realization but at the same time it would still show this "irregular" character which is specific to the mystical mode. There, it is quite true that there is no method; but I cannot say like you that there is none to "realize" in any mode whatsoever. Any method is only preparatory, of course; but, even with this restriction, you do not want to admit it, because, you say, "that would be to admit that the supernatural obeys nature." Is that correct? : if this preparation is purely metaphysical?. Doesn't the very word "metaphysics" mean "beyond nature"? There is no possible reconciliation between metaphysics and any "naturalism", whereas mysticism can, without contradicting itself and without denying itself, admit a certain "naturalism", at least provisionally. To speak of the supernatural or of metaphysics are undoubtedly only two different ways of expressing equivalent, not to say identical things; this is why it is important to insist above all on the "supra-rational" character of true metaphysics. Of course, nothing that modern philosophers believe they can call metaphysics could fit into such a conception; all this is for me only pseudo metaphysics.

The relative and "phenomenal" character of the mystical order is further manifested in the fact that mystical states are susceptible of counterfeiting: there is a "diabolical mysticism" as well as a "divine mysticism", and the outward appearances can be the same in both cases. In metaphysics, there is nothing of the sort, because, having nothing to do with phenomena, we are thereby outside of any duality of this kind.

As for the mystical "gift", I interpret it in the sense that the individual cannot, by his means, enter into a relationship with the universal or that, considered simply in himself, he is absolutely nothing in relation to the universal. I suppose, moreover, that the differences which are only in the language cannot embarrass you: from metaphysical language to theological language or vice versa a translation can be more or less difficult, but I am convinced that it is always possible, with the exception of what, in metaphysics, does not find its correspondence in theology (the reverse moreover not taking place).

I will stop, because my letter, already much longer than yours, would end up becoming a veritable volume. Naturally, I will not ask you to answer me immediately on all points; but, if certain things seem too unclear to you, which would not be surprising, I would be grateful if you would tell me clearly and provoke new explanations.

Besides, you can imagine how pleasant it is for me to get away from class concerns!

In writing to Germain, I spoke to him again about questions affecting the teaching of philosophy; he will no doubt tell you about it. I am

perceived that he had changed his mind on this since September; I fear that he is having an illusion about the possibility for his students to assimilate metaphysical notions, even elementary ones.

On the occasion of the new year, we send you, dear Miss, our best wishes for you and for all your family, and we ask you to believe in all our sympathy.

RG

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Blois, February 16, 1919.

Dear Mademoiselle,

Certainly, I was still not surprised at your silence, but I was none the less happy that, this time, you did not make me wait so long for your answer. I didn't know you were in ND de Sion; Germain hadn't told me about it. It is true that, for some time now, he has written to me only quite rarely, and above all very briefly, for which I willingly excuse him, thinking that he must in fact be quite absorbed in his teaching, especially given the number of his students. Besides, that does not prevent him from doing me very kindly the errands I have charged him with for the books I need at the moment.

I am happy to know that your thesis is progressing, and at the same time I envy you a little for being able to work on it quietly in this way. What did you decide on definitively? Do you intend to stay long in your retirement?

Contrary to what you think, until now I have hardly taken care of the preparation for the aggregation; I hardly found the time, having only recently got rid of my extra classes, and moreover I was still quite tired from a new flu. What bothers me the most is Greek, which I really can't get back to seriously. On the other hand, this year there will be a second competition reserved for demobilized soldiers, which will undoubtedly significantly reduce our chances of success. I would however like, as you say, to be rid of all that as soon as possible, in order to finally be able to return to more interesting work.

Germain spoke to me of certain difficulties he found in what I explained to you in my last letter, and of certain objections he wanted to make to me on this subject, but he did not specify anything. If his objections are partly the same as yours, my answer will be for both of you at the same time.

As for the logical difficulties, it seems to me that you greatly exaggerate them, and even that they are not so much in what I have written as in the way you have interpreted it. Guess I didn't explain myself well enough, although I tried to do it as clearly as possible. And first of all I want to tell you that we are in complete agreement in this, that metaphysics is of a supra-logical order, but that it cannot for that reason contain anything illogical. . So if you thought you found somewhere a "violation of the principle of identity", or any contradiction whatsoever, be sure that it was not in my mind. Perhaps it is simply due to the difficulty of expressing certain things. It is not, however, that I want to "trench myself in

the ineffable when I am not understood", as you seem to reproach me with; but in the end one must always reserve the part of the inexpressible, or else one would have to renounce all metaphysics. Those who believe that it is possible to express everything will only ever be able to build "systems", in the manner of Descartes; and don't you think like me that they would do much better to keep quiet?

I confess to you that, for my part, I prefer a positivist to a pseudo-metaphysician; one has the narrow-mindedness, but the other has it drastically wrong. This is why I have so little esteem for all modern philosophy; and I think that in the West one can find true metaphysics only in scholasticism, even though it seems to me incomplete, and even doubly incomplete, as I believe I have already explained to you: 1. - from the point of view theoretical, in that it does not go beyond Being; 2. - from the point of view of the realization, which is absent. For all the rest, that is to say all that there is of metaphysics in scholasticism, I persist in thinking that an agreement is perfectly possible and desirable; the greatest difficulty even seems to me to come above all from terminology, and also from certain extra-metaphysical complications and subtleties introduced by discussions whose interest is quite secondary, and, no doubt, difficulties of this kind are by no means insurmountable.

This leads me directly to answer one of your first questions: can we separate the theory from what relates to the realization? It has to be, according to what I have just told you, and even it is necessary to sort of separate the theory in two, which does not, of course, prevent the part which is limited to the consideration of the Being is incomplete in itself, nor that the whole theory should normally serve as a preparation for realization; but, if the theory must be presented in the first place, it is because its study must obviously be independent of what can only come afterwards. Moreover, the true metaphysical teaching is such that each can only go so far as the extent of his intellectual horizon allows him.

In other words, everyone can accept whatever he can understand, and cannot even refuse to accept it once he has understood it. No consideration foreign to metaphysics can intervene in this, and this applies moreover, whatever you think of it, as much to the realization as to the theory; these are things that can neither agree nor disagree with anything else, because there really is no point of comparison. Also what you can think of the relations of metaphysics and theology concerns exclusively only that portion of metaphysics which you know, I mean that which scholasticism considers, and which is properly ontology; for all the rest, the question cannot be posed in the same way.

I must also make another preliminary remark to you: it is that, as I spoke to you only of the possibility of metaphysical realization (and I could not speak to you of anything else besides), you considered the question from a point of view that one might say is more philosophical than truly metaphysical.

I mean by that that you argue as if it were a question of knowing whether it is or is not, whereas, for me, the whole question is to understand that it is, and how it is. For the rest, there is a point on which you can be entirely reassured: it is when you speak of a possible illusion in this respect; he can not

there should be no illusions in the intellectual order. The danger is therefore rather for the mystics, and there it is very real, because there it is a question, in part at least, of phenomena. I have already alluded to this when speaking of the opposition between the "divine mysticism" and the "diabolical mysticism", and I will only insist on the outward similarity of the phenomena in both cases. Thus, if it is a question of bilocation, for example, or of the physical insensitivity in ecstasy, one will no doubt find many examples of it in the lives of the saints, but perhaps even more in the stories of wizards, and the appearances are strictly the same.

Finally, I think it is quite inaccurate to say that it is a question of "seeking better than holiness"; the truth is that it is a question of something else, and that there is no common measure, even though, in the absolute totality, all the particular points of view (i.e. different from the point of view from a metaphysical or universal point of view) must obviously be understood "in addition". In any case, I don't think anyone can claim that the means matter more than the end, which, of course, does not at all mean that they are unimportant.

Having said that, I come back to your logical difficulties. You first make this objection to me: "a being cannot be simultaneously and under the same individual and universal relationship". Certainly not, but did I ever say anything like it? it must indeed be simultaneously, since one of the two states in question is not only extra-temporal, but outside of any condition of duration or succession in any mode whatsoever, therefore necessarily in perfect simultaneity with everything else. But it is quite obvious that it is not in the same respect, since it is insofar as it is something else that the being which is a human individual in one of its states is no longer subject to the conditions of human existence. As these conditions are those which define the state of existence which is that of the human individual as such, they cannot be applied to the other states, nor consequently to being as it is considered. in these other states (and this even though it would be a question of other still individual states, each of which must be subject to conditions which are specific to it and which define its domain). I thought that was clear enough, and it is really very difficult to find a contradiction there. If it is the expression "as" that you reproach me for and that you find obscure, I will answer you that it indicates precisely the relationship under which the being in question must be considered, and that thus it must prevent one from thinking that it is in the same relation that being is both conditioned and unconditioned, which would indeed be contradictory. As for saying that the meaning of this expression is not at all the same in the sentence just referred to and in this one: "man, insofar as he is God", which you declare acceptable, I admit that I do not see the difference at all; where at least I see only one possible, which is the one you want to establish next between the essential and the accidental, and, if it is really that one I will come back to it presently, for I would like to follow the order of your letter as much as possible to be sure of not forgetting anything.

You say this: "If you speak of universal being, in what relation and in relation to what is he also a human individual? It would have to be in relation to something other than himself, but there is nothing outside of him." I could first contest this last affirmation, not being able to admit that Being encloses within itself all the

possibilities; there is all this other part of theoretical metaphysics which goes beyond the domain of Being, and which you have the right to ignore, but which I am indeed forced to take into account. However, that is not what it is now; it must only be remembered that what I am saying must be understood, not only of the states which are included in Being, and which are properly the states of existence, but also of the states which are beyond Being. . If I continue to speak of "a being" in this last case, it is only because I am forced to give it any name in order to be able to speak about it; it is not a contradiction, it is a simple imperfection of language, moreover inevitable, because any other term would be just as inadequate. - I could then point out a contradiction in you, this time very real: you have just said that "there is nothing outside of universal being", and you say further on (about the conception of creation, of which I will speak to you again in its place): "God willed that outside of him something should subsist, and that this something should be united to him." How can you reconcile these two statements? The contradiction between them seems obvious to me. I add that, for me, it is in the first case that you would be right if God were only Being, because, as regards saying that something is outside of God, that simply amounts to say that God is limited. I don't want to believe that the way you think about creation really involves this consequence. - I now answer your question directly: if the universal being is also, in a sense, a human individual, it is quite simply because it encloses this possibility within itself, or, in other words, because every human individual represents a possibility of being. There is therefore no difficulty if we consider things from this point of view, which is moreover the purely theoretical point of view, and not that of the realization; to the latter, it is not properly speaking of the universal being that we should speak here, but of the "personality" which is the transcendent principle of a human individual in a certain state, and of something else in the other states. It is in relation to this "personality", the principle of all the states of a being, that the realization must essentially be envisaged; it seemed to me, however, that I had spoken to you about it already. - To return to the theoretical point of view, I see no inconvenience, not in "affecting the Infinite of this predicate" which is a human individual with its special conditions of existence, but in attributing this predicate to Being ( without the latter being in any way "affected"), because this individual is basically only a "way of being" (either with regard to universal being, or with regard to "personality"), and to attribute it not only to Being, but to the Infinite, that is to say to total Possibility, for any possibility of being is also, obviously, a possibility tout court, Being being included in the Total Possibility. - There again, there is no contradiction, since the Infinite is not affected by any attribution (and one could say that, having them all as possibilities, there is none none as they are determinations); it cannot be otherwise, for the relation of the finite to the Infinite, in whatever way one wants to envisage it, can only be strictly null: this is why one can say that the finite exists only in illusory mode with regard to the Infinite, which does not prevent it from being real in itself, and that because it is a possibility. - As for "passing continuously from one domain to another", this can only be understood if we are dealing with domains of two different but analogous states; there can no longer be any question of continuity if it is a

part, of a certain state of existence, and, on the other hand, of the Totality of states. I don't think I ever said that the realization had to take place in a continuous way, but only, perhaps, that it makes effective the continuity of all the states between them, which is quite different. I did not say either that "the individual could, by his activity, leave the conditions which define him", since on the contrary, being, insofar as he leaves these conditions, is no longer and no longer exists. can no longer be the individual, the latter only

existing as such under these conditions. February 18. - This time again, I was obliged to interrupt my letter... to make summaries of ancient history for the sixth graders! It's really interesting...

To resume at the point where I left off, I now have to answer this question: "If it is a question of universal being, how does it have to come into possession of the 'universal, since it is already universal?' Obviously, once we place ourselves from the point of view of an immutable and permanent principle, it cannot be affected or modified by any change whatsoever; you are therefore right in saying that the word "realization" implies that we place ourselves at the point of view of individual beings, who, as such, are "in becoming", I would rather say in manifestation. Only, the individual being, in order to "realize", does not have to "become infinite", which would be contradictory; he has to become effectively aware (if this word consciousness can be applied here), that he is not only the individual being, or rather that the being that he is in a certain state is also other thing in other states. - Of course, there can be no change from the point of view of the universal, nor consequently from the point of view of "personality", which is a principle of universal order; however, it is here that the distinction between the "virtual" and the "actual" should again be brought in; so unclear you find it. To try to make myself better understood, I will use here a translation in theological terms: Does the Redemption simply have the effect of restoring the order prior to the fall, or is there not something more? In other words, and to use the expressions of Saint Paul, is there not a difference between the "first Adam" and the "new Adam"? I would be happy to have your answer to this question, because I believe it would make it much easier to explain the point at hand.

I come to your distinction between the essential and the accidental, a distinction which it is really impossible for me to accept; For more clarity, it will be good to consider it first in the case where you place yourself, and then in a quite general way -- "For us, you say, the supernatural is of an accidental order. ". If this is so, it is because man, in himself, has no supernatural end; I do not believe, however, that you can accept that. If "grace is an accident", holiness is something exceptional, one could almost say abnormal, and it is not true that all are called to it; as for those who do not receive this "accidental" grace, so much the worse for them, but they nevertheless have everything to which they can legitimately claim as men. It seems to me that I see in this consequences which are strangely close to Jansenism; if you will think about it a little, I do not doubt that you will realize it without difficulty. - I know that it might seem contradictory to say that the supernatural is, in any way, part of human nature; but isn't the contradiction quite simply in \_\_\_\_\_

the words ? Also, instead of "nature", I prefer to say "essence", although this last term becomes moreover inadequate in its turn when it is a question of passing beyond being; but then, as I already told you previously, it would be exactly the same with any expression, and, provided that the necessary precautions are taken, the disadvantages are not so great as some might think. In any case, I am not one of those who think that we should attach fundamental importance to terminology, although we must of course strive to ensure that it presents the minimum of imperfection, and also the minimal hassle.

Now, in general, the distinction between the essential and the accidental is not logically founded because it is not admissible that any attribute which really belongs to a being should not be part of its essence: "omne pradicatum inest subjecto" without which it would be necessary to accept the Kantian distinction between analytical and synthetic propositions, with all the consequences it entails. I do not think you can dispute that every true proposition must be analytic: and the inherence of the attribute in the subject can only be understood in the sense that the attribute, whatever it is, is a constitutive element of the essence of the subject. There can only be occasion, under these conditions, to distinguish unequally important attributes, and it is the less important which will be called "accidental", although there is in reality only a simple difference of degree between them and others. -- Besides, why want the essence to be constituted only by certain attributes of being? I don't see any reason for it apart from a proposition like that of Descartes, for whom there must be a "main" attribute which alone expresses the whole essence of the subject (and it is only necessary to justify its dualism). But wouldn't you confuse "essence" and "species"? The individual partakes of the nature of the species, or specific essence; one can even, in a sense, say that he has this essence within him; but the individual essence also involves other attributions (and even an indefiniteness), without which there would be no possible distinction of individuals in the species. If you want to call individual differences "accidents", I for my part see no obstacle, but on the condition that you no longer oppose the accidental to the essential, since the "accidents" thus understood must be part of the essence of the individual, otherwise they would be attributes that would not really suit him. - If you see any objections to all this, I would be grateful if you would let me know.

To return to the supernatural, I would add that, if it is of the essence of the human individual, it is moreover only as a virtual possibility and which can never be anything but virtual for the individual as such. , since this possibility can only be effective beyond the individual domain. I therefore grant you that identification with God is not realizable, that is to say cannot be made effective, for the creature as creature, if you mean by "creature" the individual as such. (and I wonder if you can hear anything else). When I use the expression "as" here, I mean that, in order for one to be able to consider the "supreme identity" as effectively realized, the relation under which being must be considered is not the relation under which it is "creature" or individual, because it must obviously be considered as unconditioned. Moreover, insofar as being is unconditioned, it

is permanent, and then, strictly speaking, one should say that identity is realized without "identification". -- What I have just said for the supernatural in individuals is also what can be said for the intellect, which, being of a universal order, can never exist except virtually in individuals. Moreover, these are basically only two different ways of expressing the same thing, one more theological, when we speak of the supernatural, and the other more purely metaphysical, when we speak of the intellect.

A final remark on this question: When you speak of an "external gift", which would have no basis in the essence of the being who receives it, that makes me think of "extrinsic denominations". Now, from what I said above, it would follow that there are no purely extrinsic denominations, since such denominations would have no truth. This is moreover what Leibnitz says, but I believe that we can agree with him on this point without accepting for that all the consequences that he wishes to draw from it with regard to his conception of individual substance.

I used earlier, to speak your language, the word "creature", and I did so taking it in the sense that I consider the most acceptable, although I am not entirely sure it's exactly yours. Moreover, if I had not been able to stick to the purely metaphysical point of view, I would not have had to use this word at all, or rather the idea that it expresses; it is the way in which you pose the question (and I certainly do not blame you for it) that sometimes forces me to pass to the theological point of view. I must dwell a little on this conception of creation, which is moreover, not specifically Christian, but properly Judaic in its origin, and, consequently, common to all the doctrines which have a Judaic root. but to those only. As this conception does not exist among the Orientals (with the exception of the Muslims), any more than it existed among the Greeks, it is not possible for me to consider it as fundamental as it seems to be. be for you, nor as having any truly metaphysical significance. Its real reason for being is quite different, and, if we put everything in its place, it is not in the metaphysical domain that it has to intervene, but only in the strictly religious domain, in the strictest of this word.

This conception can certainly translate a whole order of truths in the way most appropriate to a certain level of understanding, which is very appreciable; but its necessity resides above all in a danger inherent in the mentality of certain peoples or certain races, a danger which is a tendency to admit a "matter" coeternal with God, or, if you will, to substitute for the "divine" conception a "demiurgic" concept. -- Be that as it may, if it is in the idea of creation that you find an obstacle, I can assure you that it is by no means incompatible with the realization of the "supreme identity". Their "compossibilities" (if one can use this word) appears quite clearly in certain Islamic doctrines, and Muslims are no less attached than Christians to the conception of God in the aspect of Creator.

It is all the more astonishing that you dispute the possibility of metaphysical realization, that you have in short the essential principle in the affirmation of the identity of knowing and being, which Aristotle expresses by saying that "the soul is all it knows". What is strange is that no one ever thought, in

Occident, to draw from this principle the consequences which it involves, because, if it is only a theoretical affirmation, as much would be worth saying that it is nothing at all; but I cannot believe that it was never really thought of, and, for many reasons, I am convinced that there was in the Middle Ages, in this respect, many things which did not reach to us, and that in the Church, which will perhaps astonish you more. For these and other reasons, therefore, I think that the attitude of the Church on this point cannot be as narrowly negative as you say, that it must be more "Catholic" in the etymological sense of the word, though it is at the very least doubtful that this question is one on which the Church can have to pronounce itself categorically. For me, the possibility of a real conflict between the metaphysical point of view and any other point of view, including the religious point of view, is something quite inconceivable. You say that we must be careful "not to confuse the plans"; a reproach of this kind can hardly be addressed to me, who always take care to mark the profound separation which must normally exist between the different points of view, as well as to insist on the necessary hierarchization of the multiple states of the be. There would be a lot to say on this last point, but it would really take me too far; also I only want to add, in this connection, that what makes it possible to synthesize these multiple states (without any resulting confusion between them), it is not a common element as you ask, but their common principle, which is what I called "personality"; indeed, what is common to them cannot be immanent to them, but must necessarily be transcendent in relation to each of them. I do not deny, however, that a certain conception of immanence is perhaps reconcilable with transcendence; but for that it would be necessary to consider each state, no longer in isolation and in itself, but as a whole and in union with the principle. February 20. --

One more interruption... Anyway, I still hope to finish today.

You say that "God in himself has nothing to do with creatures"; I would like to know exactly how you mean it. I believe that there is basically only a theological way of expressing what I myself said above in metaphysical terms, that the relation of the finite as such to the Infinite can only be no. This still comes down to saying that "the Infinite (and even Being) is unaffected by the multiple modifications that it involves in itself, modifications by which we must understand all the possible states of all possible beings. Only, what It must be clearly understood that any possibility of being, by the very fact that it is a possibility, and that it is the possibility that it is, must be according to the mode of manifestation (or state of existence) which is inherent in it, otherwise it would not be what it is, and even it would not be a possibility of being. Likewise, any possibility which is not a possibility of being is just as real, although in another way, involving no manifestation, since this possibility essentially belongs to the order of "non-manifestation", and could not enter the domain of the manifested (you would probably say "becoming") without being anything other than what it is, since this domain includes only the possibilities which manifest themselves (and insofar as they manifest themselves), and these are, by definition, the possibilities of being. You can see from this that I take as much care as you do to avoid any

discrepancy; but what I mean above all here is that the distinction between the possible and the real has no metaphysical value, and that it is even properly antimetaphysical. It is this distinction, complicated (or perhaps even provoked) by the intrusion of the moral point of view, which led Leibnitz to his extravagant conception of the "brave new world". Moreover, all modern philosophers have never done anything other than strive to find a limitation to universal Possibility, to reduce it to the measure of their individual understanding; it is even through this that they were able to give their doctrines the form of "systems", which is in itself the negation of metaphysics.

I allow myself one more question: in what precise sense do you take the word "Mystery"? If it means for you the "inexpressible", which is moreover its primitive and etymological meaning, I can also use it perfectly in the same way. On the other hand, if you accept the current meaning of "unintelligible" or "unknowable", I am obliged to reject it, because the unintelligible can only be the absurd, that is to say the impossible or the pure nothingness. Metaphysically, there is no unknowable; we must leave that to Kant (with his "noumen") and to Spencer, or, more generally, to the pseudo-metaphysicians and the positivists, who, for once, find themselves in agreement on this. It is true that it is very convenient for all of them, if each can decree "unknowable" all that is unknown to him, and call "mystery" all that he does not understand!

There is only one last point on which I am obliged to dwell: it is that you seem to find it extraordinary that I link the "love of charity" to the affective order, what would you say that I attach it? It cannot, however, be of the intellectual order; and I willingly admit that I could never understand what Spinoza meant by "intellectual love", such an expression appearing to me to be fundamentally contradictory. You say that you have never disputed that love, humility, etc., are the principle of the mystical way; it seems to me that it is to recognize that the sentimental element is essential to it, and then we are in agreement at least on this point, because I never said that this element constituted the end of the mystical way, but simply its characteristic medium, the one whose presence makes it properly mystical. Only here is the difficulty: the sentimental order has no reason to exist except in the individual and in relation to the individual; how then could what relates to it lead beyond individual possibilities? In any case, if he can, it will never be more than occasionally and as if "by accident"; and besides, under these conditions, anything could do the same and be taken just as well as the basis or support of a realization; but normally nothing more can be expected here than an extension (which may be indefinite) of individuality. What is of the individual cannot, in itself, have any effect outside the individual domain, just as what is action cannot free from action; if it were otherwise, the effect would not be in the cause and would be superior to it. -- I know that the idea of "charity" can be transposed analogically, as any idea can be; but then there can no longer be any question of an exclusive application to the human domain, which is apparently all that you envisage. It should rather be understood in the sense of "cosmic charity", as the Arabs understand it, for example, when they speak of

saint who "supports the worlds with his breath" (which incidentally refers to one of the symbolic meanings of the rosary among Eastern peoples). In any case, if you take charity as it is usually done, in a moral and social sense, its sentimental or affective character is manifest; and the word "love" that you add to it confirms this interpretation. -- As for "self-abnegation", it seems to me only a much weakened reflection of what the Orientals call by various names which all signify the "extinction of the self", an extinction which consists in the fact that the individual conditions, and consequently individuality itself, can only exist in an illusory mode for the being who has realized (without there being anything changed as regards appearances); it seems to me that I already pointed this out to you the last time.

Here again, I do not see that there is any real opposition; only, each one goes more or less far in the possibilities of being, and there is no metaphysics except insofar as one envisages communication with the supra-individual states, communication of which the only means is pure intellectual knowledge. . I could say of this one more or less what you say by applying it to something else: apart from that, there is only illusion, but without wanting to deny by that that this illusion is also a reality, and even all the reality that individual possibilities, human or otherwise, entail.

In closing, I am going to ask you a small favor: you would be very kind, if it is possible for you, to show me the way in which Fr. Blanche explains the reduction of the principle of sufficient reason to the principle of identity. You spoke to me about it one day, but only incidentally and in a rather vague way.

Excuse me if the last part of this letter leaves something to be desired; I was taken back today by a fairly high fever. If I don't make myself understood enough, it is understood that you can always ask me for other explanations, and I will have the greatest pleasure in giving them to you, especially since it gives me the opportunity to go out a bit of all those insignificant occupations that weigh so heavily on me. Perhaps this last reason will make you think that it will be charitable of you not to put off a new answer too long.

These ladies charge me with their regards for you, and I beg you, dear Miss, to accept the expression of my respectful sentiments.

RG

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Blois, March 30, 1919.

Dear Miss, We had

learned from Germain that the flu had affected you and your family; we see with sorrow, by your letter, that it was serious, but we do hope that you will not take long now to be completely recovered.

I address this letter to you at Saint-Germain, thinking that you are still there; do you intend to return to Paris soon? My wife and I are going to spend the Easter holidays there, and we look forward to having the pleasure of seeing you during this time.

Really, you slandered yourself by declaring yourself not quick-witted; For my part, I find it to be quite the opposite. Nor do I believe that the work that

you have undertaken for your thesis is really beyond your strength. Certainly, I very willingly authorize you to discuss in this work, according to your opportunity, some of my ideas, which are moreover mine only in expression, not in themselves. It is only the modern philosophers, makers of systems, who, with their absurd claim to originality above all else, can imagine that ideas are someone's property; and in fact, as to what their ideas are, it does not matter very much.

But no, Germain didn't reply to the last letter I wrote to you, and I don't think you should rely too much on him to do so. I've only received a few lines from him from time to time, and I've had nothing at all for quite a long time; he told me several times about a longer letter which never came (I couldn't even find out yet if he would be in Paris at Easter). I understand that you are not prepared at the moment to answer everything I said to you, but I do not leave you out of it, and I do hope that you will do so when you are completely recovered, especially moreover that I made certain objections to you in my turn which I would very much like to see you resolve.

You say you don't see any advantage in trying to achieve through two different routes simultaneously. To tell the truth, I do not even believe that it is possible, and it is better that each one chooses the way which is best suited to him; it is even for this reason that the metaphysical realization does not suppress the other, or even the others if there are any, and does not render them useless. This is also why I was telling you that it is fortunate that mystical realization exists in the West, where without it there would be absolutely nothing. However, one cannot say that one embodiment is more suited than another to human nature, in general; it is indeed to man that the metaphysical realization applies, and not to I do not know what other being with whom we do not have to concern ourselves (although the possibility of such a realization must be found in all beings, since it is of a universal order, which essentially distinguishes it from all the other more or less special modes). - On the other hand, I would gladly say that an embodiment which is subordinate to a point of view such as the religious point of view (or, more generally, to any other point of view than the pure metaphysical point of view) is therefore suitable only for certain men, and not for all.

Another remark on this subject: I never said nor thought that different traditions should or even could merge or assimilate in any way whatsoever, even in their theoretical part. All that is possible and desirable is agreement on some ground; and this cannot be disputed once it is admitted that, truth being one, it is possible to establish equivalences between its various modes of expression. I would also add that communication between the various traditional doctrines, under conditions which deprive each of them of none of its independence, can only be effected from above. Perhaps I have already told you that, moreover; unfortunately, it is currently not possible for me to explain myself on this as clearly as I would like, especially since it would be very difficult, I fear, to find qualified individuals capable of taking the initiative of an effective rapprochement such as the one I am thinking of. Finally it will perhaps come some day; Never despair...

You say that "the initiative for perfect knowledge can only come from the very object of this knowledge". I admit it very willingly; but, as it must be added that, in the field in question, the distinction between subject and object no longer applies, I do not see that this can constitute a valid objection. -- On the other hand, your fear of the "evil angels" is in no way justified, because, if their action is very certainly likely to be exerted in certain domains, and in particular in the mystical domain (that, I will be less than anyone willing to dispute it, and you must have already realized this), it is no longer the same in the metaphysical domain, where nothing "good" nor "bad" can find place, because it is well beyond all distinctions and oppositions of this kind, eminently contingent.

I now come to Fr. Blanche's argument, and first of all I thank you for the presentation you were good enough to give me. I will try to tell you what I think of it. - First of all, I am also of the opinion that this form in which the principle of causality is sometimes stated: "every effect has a cause"; is perfectly insignificant, for it is too evident that the effect and the cause are only such in relation to each other. I also think that there is every advantage in not bringing in here the idea of time, nor of any other analogous condition (by which I mean some mode of duration or succession), which may not be suitable for all states of universal existence, but only to some of them. I therefore perfectly accept this formula: "everything that is contingent has a cause"; but it remains to agree on the idea of "being contingent". I don't know to what extent one can really say that this idea and that of "having a cause" are "abstract from experience", especially since, for me, abstract ideas are only ideas of qualities and reports; it would also be necessary to specify in what sense "experience" is understood here.

Now, if we say that the principle of causality is not created by intelligence, but is imposed on it, we are in complete agreement (I naturally assume that it is about human intelligence individual); and moreover it is exactly the same with all logical principles, which are basically only a translation or an expression, in relation to the conditions of human understanding, of true principles of a universal or metaphysical order. What are called "rational principles" are not, as some seem to believe, laws laid down by reason and imposed by it on its objects; on the contrary, it is the expression, in a form appropriate to the rational mode of knowledge, of transcendent principles (of the pure intellectual order), essentially independent of reason, and which impose themselves on it.

I do not believe that one can contest the purely intellectual origin of the principle of identity and of those which are immediately derived from it; for the principle of causality, the question is a little different, because it refers to contingent being, and this is undoubtedly why Aristotelian theory wants it to be drawn from experience; but yet if it can be connected in some way with the principle of identity, can this theory be maintained? I am only asking the question for the moment; perhaps the sequel will make it easier to answer.

For the conception of the "synthetic a priori propositions", which play such a large part in Kant's system, I really cannot find any reasonable sense in it; Again, so it seems to me that we are in agreement. All

true proposition is essentially analytic in itself: "omne praedicatum in est subjecto": if the attribute were not contained in some way in the subject, it would not really suit him, as I already told you the last time. A true proposition can therefore only be synthetic for us, when we are not capable of analyzing the notion of the subject in such a way as to see how that of the attribute is contained therein. If, however, we affirm such a proposition, it is because it expresses a fact which we have observed; the guarantee of experience alone can assure us of its truth, without our knowing the reason for this truth (if we knew it, the proposition would become analytical). We therefore only have the right to affirm a proposition which presents itself as synthetic a posteriori, as expressing the observation of a fact of experience; to say that a proposition is both synthetic and a priori is to say that we do not know, not only why it is true, but even if it is true, being guaranteed neither logically, since synthetic, nor experimentally, since a priori.

Now, it remains to know how all analytical propositions, that is to say in short all true propositions, can be drawn from the principle of identity. Could we not say that they must be contained there in principle, in the same way that all the possible determinations of being must be contained in being? this brings us back to the way in which we must consider contingent being. - Before that, it might be good to agree on the statement that we will give to the principle of identity. You say "principle of identity or non-contradiction"; this is perhaps better than saying like Leibniz, "principle of identity or contradiction". I will not return to the distinction between these two principles, the second being moreover an immediate consequence of the first. I don't know if you see exactly the difference I am making between "principle of contradiction" and "principle of non-contradiction", which I in no way regard as equivalent; but it seems to me we've talked about that before. I therefore simply remind you that, for me, the principle of identity applies strictly to being, while the principle of non-contradiction, because of its negative form, is capable of applying even beyond being: it is what, in being, affirms itself as the principle of identity; but here that does not matter, since it is only a question of being. - In this regard, have I ever told you how the principle of identity contains all that is metaphysically valid in what is agreed to be called the "ontological argument"? I don't remember, but if you're interested, we can come back to it.

To stay on our subject, I therefore accept, rather as a consequence of the principle of identity than as an expression of this principle itself, the formula given by Fr. Blanche: "a being cannot be and not be". . This formula applies well to being in all its universality (I suppose that it was by distraction that you wrote "its generality"), and it certainly has an advantage in this respect over that of Aristotle, although the use of the word "same" may not necessarily imply the introduction of the category of substance; I would be grateful if you could give me some additional information on this point. - Now, it is understood that, when various determinations will be introduced into the being, according to the degree that one will consider, it will be necessary to express these same

determinations in the statement of the principle that will be made to correspond to it. Only, when you say (you or Father Blanche) that "being is enriched by more and more particular determinations", there is a word there that I hardly like, and moreover I cannot lose sight of the fact that anything more determinative is actually less metaphysical. As I was already telling you earlier, all the possible determinations of being are in principle in pure being, and this must indeed be more than any of its modes. \_\_\_\_

That said, I fully admit that the notion of causality should not be applied to pure being, which cannot, despite Spinoza and others, be properly called "causa sui", because, to be cause, one must first be. On the other hand, this notion of causality is however still of a universal order; it must therefore place itself well beyond all genres, that is to say before the categories. You say it relates to existence; this is quite obvious if we take this last word in its proper and etymological sense, which, in short, is precisely that of "being dependent". - So basically, "existing", "dependent" and "contingent" are one and the same thing; if this is indeed Fr. Blanche's thought, we are in complete agreement.

The existent is indeed contingent, that is to say non-necessary, in the sense that, by definition, it derives its being from something other than itself, or, in other words, it does not have any itself its own *raison d'être*. On the other hand, the domain of existence is that of universal manifestation; I therefore arrive at this: the contingent is the manifested. You would doubtless say: the contingent is the created; and it is basically the same thing, because "manifestation" and "creation" are only two different ways of expressing themselves, according to two different points of view, one purely metaphysical, the other rather theological.

A short parenthesis: is it really true that Aristotelianism is really dualistic? In any case, this dualism would go much further than that of Descartes, because its two terms (act and power) are of a universal order, while those of the Cartesian dualism (spirit and matter) are not at all; but isn't there still something more, and is it indeed, in Aristotle's thought, a true dualism, that is to say irreducible? It seems that pure being is beyond the distinction between act and potency, and if it is the common principle of both, it is no longer dualism; Would you be so kind as to tell me what you think of it. In any case, I agree with you when you say that the idea of creation profoundly modified Aristotelianism; but act and potency can be the equivalent of what I prefer to call essence and substance, that is to say the two poles of universal manifestation. Any dualist position is certainly untenable, and moreover devoid of any real metaphysical import; this is why it is difficult for me to accept that this position was really that of Aristotle.

I come back to the notion of the "contingent": a contingent being, not having its *raison d'être* in itself, is relative and incomplete; such are all individual beings, and even, more generally, all beings manifested as manifested (or existing). I think that there is no need to dwell on this further, and that you should easily see all that can be drawn from it concerning the relativity of "individual substances". - But in what sense can we say that a contingent being "can exist or not exist"? In the sense that manifestation is only one

"accident" in relation to its principle (which is not affected by it); but any possibility which is a possibility of manifestation must thereby manifest itself according to the mode which its nature involves, otherwise it would not be what it is. Here again, we come back to things that I have already told you in one of my previous letters; I shall therefore content myself with referring you there. In a word, existence is implied in being and derives from it because it is a possibility of being, and, on the other hand, it must contain all the possibilities of manifestation as these manifest themselves; but the whole of universal manifestation is strictly null with regard to the non-manifested, and this is why one can regard it as contingent, or even as illusory (without thereby denying it the reality of which it is susceptible), even that it cannot not be what it is. I believe that it is on this way of considering contingency that there may be some difficulty for you, and yet it is the only one that is metaphysically tenable, because any distinction between the possible and the real is properly anti-metaphysical. .

As for the distinction between essence and existence, it seems to me that it entails that existence is not really an "attribute", for every attribute must be comprised in essence, or, if you prefer, express something of the essence. One could perhaps say that what is included in the essence is the possibility of existence, not existence itself, and this would again show the accidental or contingent character of the latter. - For me, this distinction between essence and existence is based above all on the fact that, if we consider essence and substance correlatively in relation to any manifested being, existence is on the side of substance ; it seems to me that I have already spoken to you about that too. - I will only add one more word: a possible being and an existing being which have the same essence are indeed the same being, since the possible being includes the possibility of existence (and without that it could not have the same essence as an existing being), or existence in principle, i.e. it possesses in permanent mode (actually or virtually) what existence or manifestation develops only in transitory mode . Apart from what only exists negatively, that is to say as deprivation or limitation, everything must be found in the principle, but, of course, in the unconditioned state which is that of non-manifestation. Moreover, if this were not so, the "resurrection of the dead" to speak theologically, could not have any meaning. I leave it at that for this time, asking you to reflect on this last consideration and tell me if it is possible for you to see the thing differently, which would surprise me a little.

With my wishes for a full recovery, we send you, Dear Miss, our fondest memory.

RG

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Blois, July 1, 1919.

Dear Miss, We are

leaving tomorrow for Paris, the writing of the aggregation to take place Friday, Saturday and Monday. I plan to stay until Friday the 11th, having to come back here for the distribution of the prizes which will take place on the 12th. If you can come and see us on Tuesday the 8th,

on Wednesday 9 or Thursday 10, let us know with a quick note; needless to say that you will make us very happy. I will lend you my work on the substance as you ask me.

My wife joins me in assuring you, dear Mademoiselle, of our deepest sympathy.

RG

Paris, July 10, 1919.

Dear Miss, Received

your note this morning; I'm sorry for the setback that made us miss your visit, but I think you can replace her for us next week, because, after much hesitation, I'm leaving alone tomorrow for Blois, for the distribution of prizes, and I'll come back here. Saturday night to enjoy the holidays a bit. So you can come and see us any day of next week from Tuesday, but you will be very kind to let us know in order to be sure to find us.

Our fondest memory.

RG

Paris, July 30, 1919.

Dear Miss, We received

your card last night, and we learned this morning only the result of the admissibility. I am one of the 7 out of 24 who made it through this first test. It will now be necessary to pass the oral, which, it seems, can still last a fortnight!. We have Boutroux as president of the jury. - Here are the subjects of the 3 compositions: (1). - Role of intuition in knowledge. (2). - Realism in art. (3). - Ideas and genres in Plato's philosophy.

We regretted not seeing you before your departure, and think that at the start of the school year we will have more chance of meeting each other. When the examination is over, we will return to Blois, then we will spend a fortnight in Touraine; as you say, I'm starting to really need to rest, and even not to think about anything for a while if that were possible.

Please remember us fondly of your parents and accept for you our best friendships.

RG

The Portal, by Champigny-sur-Vende  
(Indre et Loire), September 8, 1919.

Dear Mademoiselle, I

was about to write to you to tell you about my examination when we saw in the Écho de Paris the news of the death of your mother. Since your response, I have been unable to find the time to give you any details on this subject. Here is what happened: First I must confirm that the result is negative, because

you must be sure. We were seven eligible, as I believe I told you, plus there were seven eligible elders; there were fourteen positions available, and yet we received only five candidates in all. It is the only aggregation where such severity has been demonstrated: everywhere else, there have been fifteen to twenty received. Moreover, quite incomprehensible things happened there: thus, among the eligible former students, a professor from the École alsacienne in Paris was refused, who had given a quite remarkable lesson, while the only candidate in this category who was accepted had given a lesson beside the subject and had said nonsense from a scientific point of view, which none of the members of the jury were able to notice. We also refused two doctors of letters, one of whom is a lecturer in a faculty!

Among the new entrants, we received a Normalien who, having found himself ill, had been unable to give his lesson; it is all the same a little extraordinary. In general, the candidates who have been accepted are those who have simply demonstrated memory and erudition, without any personal idea.

For my part, I had the misfortune to have for my lesson a moral subject (the idea of sacrifice) which did not interest me at all; however, I did something that made sense, but which must have certainly displeased Darlu, who was presiding in the absence of Boutroux; this one, probably suffering, could not indeed attend the oral, unfortunately. I don't think there could have been anything more than that, because I was very satisfied with my author's explanations, even for the Greek, which I got back to more easily than I thought. It is true that, if I had had a lesson subject better suited to my abilities, the result would probably have been the same, given the mentality of the jury. Moreover, Lévy-Brühl himself had told me that this competition was made above all for much younger candidates, which the results fully confirm. You know that I have never had great regard for examinations and competitions in general, but despite everything, if I had not seen things so closely, I would not have been able to believe that it was happening from this way. The results of the competition for eligible alumni are particularly shocking because, for them who only had the oral, everything happened publicly. You must think that, after this experience, I have no desire to start again, although some encourage me to do so; in any case, to make up my mind, eligibility would have to be maintained, and we don't yet know if that will be. Of course, I wouldn't do any more preparation than this time, because I prefer to devote my time to more interesting work, which I intend to get back to as soon as I've taken a little rest.

I am addressing my letter to Perros-Guirec, thinking that you have returned there as you told us, and that you will all recover a little from the terrible emotions through which you have just passed.

Believe, dear Mademoiselle, in all our sympathy.

RG

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Blois, November 5, 1919.  
74, rue du Foix.

Dear Miss, We have

only just returned to Blois after a two-month stay in the countryside, during which I took a complete rest which did me a lot of good.

We expect to return to Paris towards the end of the month, and we hope to have the pleasure of seeing you then. Of course I will communicate to you again my work on the substance, as you had already asked me in July, and I would be very happy if it can be of any use to you for your thesis.

I did not know at all, before receiving your letter, this new decision fixing an age limit for the aggregation. From what my colleagues here who I have spoken to have told me, this limit is thirty years, but is not applicable to candidates who have already taught. Do you have more specific information on this subject? - On the other hand, I wonder if our admissibility will be maintained; it had been discussed, but it does not seem that any decision has yet been made. If I only had the oral to pass, I could certainly try to sit again, but under the same conditions as this time, that is to say without much preparation, because I wouldn't want to spend a lot of time study more or less insignificant authors. The most annoying thing is that these authors change every time; it seems that the new program is already published, but I haven't seen it yet. Moreover, I wonder if the 1920 competition will not be entirely reserved for conscripts.

Be that as it may, I don't expect to wait so long before getting back to my personal work, and I intend to take care of it this winter, while trying to find some lessons.

What then becomes of Germain? He hasn't given me the slightest sign of life since the beginning of the holidays, and yet I had written to him at the same time as to you; really, I can't help but think he's a little too careless. Has he returned to Paris? I wonder what he will do this year, because now, with the age limit, he will no longer be able to think of presenting himself for the aggregation.

My wife entrusts me with her friendship for you, and I, dear Mademoiselle, please believe in my respectful sentiments.

RG

.....

Paris, December 16, 1919.

Dear Mademoiselle,

We have finally been in Paris for a week now; unfortunately we will be away for a wedding between Christmas and New Years, so I wonder when we can meet. Do you come to Paris from time to time and do you have a few free moments? In this case, you would only have to warn us; I must tell you, however, that all this week I have been busy.

We saw Germain, who gave us some additional explanations about the "universal review", the project of which I did not know before you told me about it; he told us that the appearance of the first issue would be delayed until March. If I can do something for the Review, even apart from the philosophical part, I will do it very willingly, well, we

we'll talk again.

You may know that Germain has now received an answer about the aggregation; it seems that he will be able to present himself there, because we will take into account the five years of war during which there was no competitive examination. Under these conditions, it would have been better to say that the age limit was set at 35 and not at 30... Thank you for sending Dimier's article; I believe he is right in his assessment of the real reasons for the measure in question. - It seems that the benefit of admissibility will be maintained for those mobilized who will stand for next year's special competition, but for us, there is no question of it; if they don't keep it for us, it's quite probable that I won't bother about it.

For the lessons, I have at the moment a pupil; it's a beginning, but I would like to be able to find a few more.

As for my work, I would like before tackling my doctoral thesis, to be able to publish various less important things, or rather less voluminous. I believe that one of the great difficulties, for the thesis, will be to find the means of having it accepted; it is to be feared that I find myself in the presence of people who declare themselves incompetent. So I don't yet know in what form I will be able to present this; in any case, you must realize that I do not want at any price to make a large volume on a simple question of detail, more or less insignificant, which is the case with most theses. In short, for me it is a matter of doing something other than scholarly work, something that really has a metaphysical significance, and yet on the other hand, there are certain orders of questions that I would not like address in a thesis; you see what the difficulty is.

See you soon, I think, dear Mademoiselle, the pleasure of seeing you; in the meantime, please believe in our very fond memories.

RG

.....

Paris, December 31, 1919.

Dear Miss, I wrote to

you a fortnight ago to tell you that we were finally back in Paris, but I am very much afraid that my letter did not reach you, because it was posted at the same time as several others, and from none I have had an answer. I asked you then if it would be possible for you to come and see us at the beginning of last week, because we thought we would be away between Christmas and the first of the year for the wedding of one of my sisters-in-law; but, this marriage having been fixed for the 8th of January, our departure was a little postponed. We will leave Paris the day after tomorrow, and we expect to be back there around the 15th; I hope we can meet then.

We have only seen Germain once, about three weeks ago; he had then given me some details on the project of the "universal review" of which you spoke to me in your last letter, and had informed me that the first number could not appear until March instead of January. He had also told me that, for the aggregation, he had received an answer according to which, for the age limit, the five years of war would be taken into account; if so, wouldn't it have been better simply to say right away that this limit was set at 35 years? what it is

not possible to know yet is whether the benefit of eligibility will be retained; but it will be kept for demobilized soldiers who presented themselves for the October competition; if I have to start all over again, I would prefer to give it up purely and simply, and moreover I think that Dimier is right in the article you sent me. I believe that I already told you all this in my previous letter; if you have received it, which seems unlikely to me, you will kindly excuse the repetition.

I was also answering what you asked me about my work, which, moreover, I have finally been able to recover a little from since we have been here. I don't think it's best to start with a doctoral thesis for which the most difficult thing will be to get the subject accepted (I don't want to be imposed on a simple question of detail), as well as the way of dealing with it; what I fear the most is finding myself in front of people who declare themselves incompetent. So it would be better if I published something else first; but it's the fees that are a bit scary right now. On the other hand, there are many questions that I would not like to tackle in a thesis, but to which I promise myself to devote sooner or later a series of separate works, which moreover seem to me to be worth more than books too bulky. Anyway, I hope we can talk a bit about all this again soon.

We wish, for you and yours, that the new year be more propitious to you than the one that has just passed, and we ask you to believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our best feelings.

RG

Paris, January 15, 1920.

Dear Mademoiselle,

We found your letter on our return to Paris, of course your silence is entirely excused, and moreover we thought that it would hardly be possible for you to come and see us during the holidays. It will therefore be for next Tuesday, January 20, as you propose; we have no impediment for that day, and I will be very happy to be able to speak with you; I therefore hope that you will be able to come early.

For the review, I would like to know a little more clearly what is the idea which, as you say, serves as its doctrine; what I know so far is still very vague, but I think you can give me more precise information in this regard. Is there currently a more or less defined program, or something that takes the place of it? In any case, I would readily believe that it will be easier for me to do something there than in journals of academic spirit; the question is above all to know what will be likely to interest the readers to whom this organ will be addressed.

As for my work in progress, I haven't been able to take care of it for a fortnight, but I intend to get back to it as soon as possible; it was not going too badly before our absence.

Believe, Dear Miss, in our best memory.

RG

Paris, February 10, 1920.

Dear Mademoiselle,

I received your letter on Saturday, and only yesterday the manifesto of the "Revue Universelle" which it announced to me. Thank you for sending this; Germain could not find his copy. Of course, I will return it to you when I have read it.

We very much regret that you are not coming to Paris at this time; maybe you can still find the time one of these days. As for us, we accept in principle your invitation to go and see you at Saint-Germain, but it won't be until some time, because we all still have a cold, more or less, and moreover, having foot pain, I'm avoiding to walk as much as is not absolutely essential.

My work, which I still continue to take care of, is not quite finished yet, but I don't think I will have it for very long now. We went to Mr. Rouart, he entrusted us with the image models.

Believe, Dear Miss, in our friendly memory

RG

.....

Paris, February 28, 1920.

Dear Miss, We

intend, if you don't mind, to see you next Thursday. Just let us know in a quick note if you are free or if this thwarts your plans. If the railway strike isn't over, I think we'll still have the resource of the tram: aren't the trams leaving every half hour?

My work is now finished; I just have to copy it, which is not the most pleasant, but the most difficult will probably be to find a publisher.

Believe, Dear Miss, in our best and most sympathetic memory.

RG

.....

Paris, May 12, 1920,

Dear Miss, Do you

still come to Paris every Tuesday? I believe you told us that you were free from 11:00 to 3:00. So be kind enough to come and have lunch with us next Tuesday: we can at least have a little chat.

Regarding the legend of Bacchus, it was not possible for me, despite my research, to find a lot of information; I don't even....

(Incomplete document)

.....

Paris, July 16, 1920.

Dear Miss, We were

sorry not to see you before your departure, and we hope that your brother François' state of health has not worsened. When we received your letter, we were going, on our side, to write to you to ask you to

Excuse me, because Françoise had been in bed since Sunday with the measles, and we would have been afraid of bringing this disease to you.

We shared your information with our cousin, we don't know again what she's going to do.

As soon as Lévy-Brühl returned, I spoke to him about my work; he almost turned me away from Alcan, telling me that the latter, even with his recommendation, would not want to take on the cost of publishing. I therefore contacted Rivière, who did not refuse in principle, and who even seems to like the subject; I gave him my manuscript today, but he needs some time to reflect and take advice from different people, especially Fr. Peillaube. Do you believe that a word from you to the latter could influence him favorably? If so, I would kindly ask you to do so. I don't know who other people Rivière usually consults; I suspect a little that Maritain must be one of them, but I am not certain as for Fr. Peillaube. I have to go back to see Rivière in a fortnight, and I would really like to have a definitive answer at that time.

Do you know if Germain presented himself to the aggregation? For us, we wonder if it still exists; it's been a month and a half since we've even seen him.

I think that if you have already left Saint-Germain, my letter will reach you all the same. We still intend to leave for Blois in the first days of August.

Believe, Dear Miss, for you and your family, in our very affectionate memory

RG

We will hear the "Legend of Saint Christopher" on Wednesday. -- I still have the issue of "Lettres" and the book by Pécoul that you lent me: are you going to miss them?.

.....

Paris, August 3, 1920.

Dear Miss, I have

wanted to write to you for some time, but I waited to be able to give you the result for my book: Rivière agrees to publish it at his own expense, and he has promised to publish it before the end of the year ; the agreement was signed yesterday. As you must think, I'm quite satisfied, especially since I was worried that it would drag on much longer. In the absence of Father Peillaube, it was the secretary of the "revue de philosophie", Abbé Hèzelay (is that how his name is spelled? I may disfigure him), who learned of my manuscript and gave a favorable opinion; he also consulted Maritain, who supported; you see that everything is for the best. Thank you for kindly writing to Fr. Peillaube; it will perhaps not be useless, for Rivière would prefer, if possible, that the work appear in his collection, because there is already a guaranteed sale; but he does not make it an essential condition, since he committed himself before having consulted Fr. Peillaube.

You no doubt know that poor Germain was refused the aggregation; he has

was a little surprised especially since the assessments that Lalande gave him are completely opposite to what he thought. He is looking very bad at the moment and has made a painful impression on us; I think he needs complete rest.

He asked for a position for the start of the school year, but I wonder if he will be able to teach a class; moreover, it is not certain that he will obtain anything, although Lalande has spoken to him of a possible position near Bordeaux.

We are happy to know that François is doing better; as for Françoise, she is completely recovered now. So we are going to leave tomorrow for Blois, and we will return here at the end of September. I put aside what you lent me; I'll give it to you when you come back.

We were delighted with our evening at the Opera: we found the sets superb and the piece very interesting.

Believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our very pleasant memory.

RG

74 Rue du Foix, Blois.

Blois, September 17, 1920.

Dear Mademoiselle,

Your letter came to find me at my mother-in-law's, where we spent three weeks; we returned to Blois last Wednesday, and that is why I did not answer you sooner. I think you are now back at Saint-Germain; as for us, we will be in Paris in the first days of October.

I am in fact very satisfied with the letter from Fr. Peillaube that you communicated to me, and I gladly accept the proposal to write a few articles for the "Revue de Philosophie". It's all right with me to do something against Theosophy; I'll get to it as soon as I get back to Paris, because it's not easy for me to work here, and besides, I don't have my documents to hand. Like you, I hope that it will succeed better than with university circles, and, from this point of view, it is perhaps better for my book to appear at Rivière than at Alcan. -- There is only one thing that bothers me: Father Peillaube says that Rivière is never ready, and I realize that, because he promised me the first trials at the end of August, and I haven't received anything yet; also I write to him today to try to activate it a little because I would like that the volume can appear before the end of the year as it was

agreed.

I have also just written to Germain to ask him what is happening to him, because I have not heard from him since the beginning of August, his state of health is truly worrying, and it is unfortunately unlikely that he can do something at the start of the school year.

I read the first volume of Maritain's manual, which Germain lent me before we left Paris, and which really interested me; but I find that it is really a little complicated to be put in the hands of the students. Apart from this general reproach, there are also some things in the historical introduction that I will tell you about when we have the pleasure of seeing each other.

Believe, I beg you, Dear Mademoiselle, in our very sympathetic sentiments.

RG

Paris, October 22, 1920.

Dear Miss, We only

returned to Paris last week, but here we are, all the same, more or less settled. As we believe that you are not without opportunities to come here, we would be happy to see you one of these days.

Could you let us know with a quick note to be sure to find us? I have many things to tell you about my work, the printing of which has not yet begun. It would take too long to explain to you by correspondence; but, apart from the delay which is already annoying, I am afraid that I have some difficulty with my editor, and perhaps in that case you could do me a service; we will talk about this together.

Has Father Peillaube returned, and what is his address? I would like to see him before starting to prepare the article he is asking for, in order to know a little more precisely what he wants.

We have recently received news from Germain that we did not know so far from us; he seems much better than here, waiting for his daily bread, let's hope he can continue, without too much fatigue.

Believe, Dear Miss, in our best memory.

RG

.....

Paris, November 27, 1920.

Dear Miss, Thank

you for the information you sent us about the paintings; we will take care of this affair, and we will let you know if we have succeeded. We haven't been able to do anything so far, because we've all had very bad colds, even the flu, and also because of the preparations for the wedding; these are the same reasons that prevented me from writing to you earlier. We came back from Angers last night, quite tired from the trip; finally, we will be a little calmer now, and we hope to have the pleasure of seeing you soon.

I went to see Fr. Peillaube, who received me very kindly, and who himself offered to intervene with Rivière for the history of the thesis. I think he must have done so, because when I saw Rivière again, he no longer made any objections to me and only told me that we would arrange later for the copies to be provided (it takes 67); he announced to me at the same time that the printer had finally started work. It was very true this time, because the beginning of the tests arrived the day before yesterday. -- On the other hand, everything is settled on the side of the Sorbonne: I was finally able to meet Sylvain Lévy, who gave me his written approval; the dean immediately granted his authorization and I had the title of the thesis registered with the secretariat. So we just have to wait, and I think that barring incidents such as a new printers' strike, everything can be ready around February.

I have begun to prepare my article for the review of Fr. Peillaube, I will take it to him as soon as it is finished.

Being still without news from Germain, I will decide to write to him to find out what his prolonged silence means. I'm going to try to get him to finally send me back the article he's had for so long, and then I'll let you know; maybe, when you have read it, you will have an idea about its use.

I found a few issues of Pécoul's review, which I have put aside for you.

I haven't yet been able to go see Bernoville; maybe I could still get there one of these days; I would very much like to have some explanation concerning the interrupted controversies.

Believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our most sympathetic feelings.

RG

Were you able to obtain some information about Mother-Marie-Louise?

.....

Paris, December 16, 1920.

Dear Miss, Up to this

moment, we have not taken any days for vacation; so we can go and see you when you give us a sign. I would only ask you to let us know as soon as you can, so that we can have the other days, if necessary.

Françoise is in bed with a second measles, but much milder than that of July; we do hope that it will be put back for the holidays, and that we will be able to take it to you without danger to your brothers and sisters.

I too would be very happy to see the projects you are telling me about come to fruition; we will talk about it during Christmas week, but I do hope that the weather will be milder, because without it my mind and body will be absolutely frozen...

Still nothing from Germain; I will take the party to copy my article. I haven't quite finished copying the other one yet, but I think I can take it to P.

Peillaube next Tuesday.

Our best memory

Rene Guenon

.....

Paris, January 19, 1921.

Dear Miss, I finally

received the rest of my proofs on Monday, a fairly large package, since it now makes up about a third of the work. If you could come see us on one of your next trips to Paris, I would give you this beginning so that you can read it now. I hope the sequel won't take that long, and I'd like it to be finished by the end of next month.

Have you thought about the question of the subtitle of my article? I would like to respond to this subject to Fr. Peillaube as soon as possible, but I confess that I still have no idea...

Did the little operation that François had to undergo go well? We like to believe that it no longer seems so.

Believe, dear Mademoiselle, in all our sympathy.

Rene Guenon

Were you finally able to obtain information for Mother Marie-Louise?

.....

Paris, March 7, 1921

Dear Miss, Since

Saturday, I have been in possession of SL's report, which is so curious and extraordinary that, if you have a moment next Friday, I will ask you to come and read it. I tell you next Friday because, the other Friday, we may not be here.

I didn't meet Maritain on Saturday; he hadn't stayed to lunch in Paris, and they couldn't tell me when he was to leave for Louvain. I wonder if he will still be there on Thursday; perhaps I will try to go back to see him; in any case, if you meet him, you can let him know what happened to me.

Believe, dear Mademoiselle, in all our sympathy.

Rene Guenon

.....

Blois, March 27, 1921

### EXTRACTS

It seems to me that there is still a little misunderstanding about what I told you about your article (1) and the "concept of contemplation". What I reproached you for was not at all to say that this concept is precise in the Gospel: it was to say that it had been "until then confused", and that in a completely generally and without making any restrictions (...).

Another thing still: you say that "the created intellect could not in itself contemplate God"; this is obvious if it is a question of the intellect, created, but can this epithet be applied to the pure and transcendent intellect, which alone intervenes directly in the metaphysical order? I think on the contrary that it should be reserved for the individual faculties (reason and other psychological elements). Because I don't see that "created" can not be synonymous or equivalent to "manifested" and "conditioned".

In short, creation and manifestation are one and the same thing considered from different points of view (otherwise, creation would be necessary and eternal); but, precisely, the pure intellect is, in itself, of the order of the unmanifested and the unconditioned, and, if it did not itself belong to this domain, which is that of metaphysics, he could not reach it, any more than can reason and the other created faculties, which by virtue of their very nature and their own conditions, will never receive anything but a sort of indirect knowledge of it, by reflection. And

by participation (at least as long as the limiting conditions which define individuality subsist, i.e. until the total realization is effected, after which there can no longer be any question of these faculties as distinct from the intellect itself or the principle of all knowledge). (...)

(1) This is the article published by NM Denis in February 1921 in the "Revue Universelle", under the title: "The Renaissance of Mystical Studies" (N. d. E.)

.....

Paris, May 7, 1921.

Dear Mademoiselle,

We have received your kind card from Siena, and, suspecting that you must now be back, I thought I had the answer you announced to me, and which in fact reached me yesterday. I hasten to write to you again because this morning I finally received the first copies of my book; no doubt the whole thing is not yet bound (the printer was to send them as they were ready), but this time, I hope it won't take long, and really it's time; It's already been two months since everything was almost finished, or so we said. If you can do us the pleasure of coming to see us next week (is it always Friday that you come to Paris?), I will exchange the manuscript (which I hardly need now) for a volume printed. Naturally, I am still counting on the article which you were good enough to promise me for the "Universal Review". Would you also like, when you have a few moments, to think of a shorter review for the "Letters"? I haven't seen Pourvouville for a long time, but since he was the one who offered me the insertion, I don't think he's changed his mind.

I haven't seen Maritain either since our return here; I'll have to try to meet him one of these days, but I'll wait until my book comes out; it was really a bit boring to always be at the same point! My work on Theosophism is almost finished; I have only one more chapter to write; I am also waiting for some additional information that I have been promised, after which all I will have to do is copy it, which is not the most interesting thing....

We finally received some time ago a letter from poor Germain, which made a painful impression on us: he says that he is bored, that he does not know how he lives, and that he cannot do no work. In answering him, I told the whole story of my "thesis" since, we have no other news.

I now come to your answer; and, first of all, I see with satisfaction that there are a certain number of points on which we are quite in agreement; on others, it may be that the difference is mainly in the terminology. Thus, you are perfectly right in regarding the distinction between the natural order and the supernatural order as necessary; but this distinction, expressed otherwise, does not exist much less among Easterners, with this difference, however, that they grant to the natural order only a much less importance than do Westerners (I speak of course, Westerners who accept the supernatural order). Moreover, I think I have sufficiently insisted in my work, on various occasions, on the irreducible opposition of Eastern doctrines with regard to

all "moralism"; if one does not perhaps find there as much insistence as in Western theology in expressly recalling the distinction in question, it is because the thing is taken for granted, and no one could think that the relation of the finite to the Infinite is nothing but zero, so that the finite as such (or the natural order) has some interest in itself.

Now, the expression "human intellect" can give rise to confusion, because this "created, manifested, or conditioned" intellect of which you speak, which only knows "by reflection and by participation", and which is indeed all that that the human individual possesses, as an individual, this intellect there is not really an intellect, but it is properly reason. And I will add that this reason is not, by itself, "capable of being elevated to the supernatural state"; such an elevation, for the reason as for all the other individual faculties, is nothing other than the "Transformation" which is implied in addition in some way in the total realization. After this transformation, moreover, one can no longer say that it is reason or any individual faculty, since individuality itself then only has an illusory existence (the essential character of individuality as such being to be conditioned); this is again an application of the principle that I reminded you of above, that the relation of the finite to the infinite is strictly zero. If it is this reason which you call "human intellect" you are quite right in saying that it "is part of the world and is a finite thing"; if, on the contrary, it is a question of the transcendent intellect (the only one, for me, that we can properly call by this name of intellect), it is quite different, but we cannot qualify it as "human", since it is of the universal order and is in no way a faculty of human individuality. It is this intellect alone which has, in itself, "the possibility of becoming (or rather of being) all that is knowledge", the other faculties have it only by "participation" in its essence, and that in the boundaries of a certain domain. As you recognize the identity of being and knowing, you must draw the conclusion that all that is is knowable; therefore, if being is "without limit", the possibility of knowledge must also be unlimited (which clearly shows that, in itself, it cannot belong to a limited, conditioned, individual being). To simplify, I neglect here the distinction, however capital metaphysically, between the Being and the Infinite; Strictly speaking, it should be said that the knowable extends not only to all being, but also beyond being.

The distinction between reason and intellect (a distinction the absence of which seems to me to have much to do with your objections) therefore still corresponds to that of the two orders, natural and supernatural; at bottom, it is only one aspect of it. I would restrict the possibilities of reason much more than you do, and the "transformation" of which it is capable (as anything can be, for that matter) appears to me only as a secondary consequence of the realization. As for the latter, I say with you that the principle is not in the individual man (since it is in the transcendent intellect), but that does not prevent the individuality from providing him with a point of reference. 'support. You dispute that there can be two kinds of realizations, because, for you, there is no realization when "man remains in the plane of his nature", that is to say, in sum, in the domain of his individuality. However, the extensions of which this domain is susceptible constitute all the same a

effective realisation, however imperfect and incomplete it may be, and even though it certainly has no common measure with supra-individual realisation. I would even say that the first can, in certain cases, be a preparation for the second, just as it can also, in other cases, be an obstacle to it. This realization of extended individuality is already enough to bring into play faculties which escape entirely from the field of investigation of psychologists, and which nevertheless have nothing supernatural, nor even "preternatural". Moreover, this last expression lends itself to some objections: strictly speaking, everything that is not natural is supernatural, conversely, so that the "preternatural" must still be natural. If we want to use this word to designate what, in the natural order, is in some way supra-normal, we can apply it to these faculties, of which I spoke, but as I know very well that this is not the case. It's not how it's usually understood, it's better not to. I will grant you, moreover, that there is sometimes a possibility of confusion between the exercise of these faculties and certain "preternatural" phenomena in the ordinary sense; but, in any case, the confusion could not go further and extend to the truly transcendent order, where there cannot, moreover, be a question of "phenomena" of any kind (which excludes any possibility of illusion).

I don't know if the way in which we interpret Averroes' conception is quite accurate; one cannot say that the intellect properly speaking is "God", but one can perhaps say that it is "divine"; in any case, if we don't want to use any term that seems more or less theological, he is certainly "superhuman". The greatest difficulty, here, undoubtedly comes from the fact that Westerners are accustomed to considering in a being nothing other or more than individuality, as if the individual were the complete being; and even then what they contemplate is only a restricted portion of the individuality. This is both much more and much less than they think: much more in terms of the possibilities it entails, but much less in relation to true being; there is not even any common measure between individuality and the being of which it is only the manifestation under certain special and determined conditions.

I come back to the question of contemplation: Orientals, generally speaking, never separate idea from reality, and here even less than anywhere else; their logic is, in this respect, somewhat different from that of the Greeks, and still more from that of modern Westerners, in the sense that, for them, there is not the thing on one side and the idea of the other, but the idea is valid only insofar as it is identical to the thing itself. In any case, the idea, even simply theoretical, that we can have of contemplation, does not seem to me to be properly called a concept, with the meaning that this word has in Western logic; that is the objection I wanted to make to you on this point. Now, I would be happy to be persuaded that theologians do not consider theory for its own sake alone, even when they do not speak expressly of any realization; but I fear that you are generalizing too much, and there are certainly some in whom the preoccupations of another order are scarcely noticed. Be that as it may, what you say has the consequence that any true believer should regard the strictly "philosophical" point of view as untenable, and even condemnable; On this, it is certainly not I who will contradict you.

As for the means of realization, you say, on the one hand, that "you do not believe

not that no means, no tradition, no human work is necessary for God to act", and, on the other hand, that "the supernatural for us is only realized under certain conditions"; how do you reconcile these two things? I confess to you that I do not see it very well; but I believe that we agree on this: if theoretical preparation is an indispensable condition for metaphysical realization, it is not the same for mystical realization, for which it is nevertheless not useless. But I see nothing astonishing that the ideas received directly by the mystics are identical to those expressed by the Tradition, since these ideas are true, and that the truth is one and exists independently of the mind which conceives it. All this is perfectly explained, either by intellectual intuition, or even, within certain limits, by that extension of the individual faculties of which I spoke a moment ago; There exists, in this last order, a true "clairvoyance", naturally very different from that of theosophists and occultists (which is above all auto-suggestion), but which it is necessary to distinguish from pure intellectual intuition. For the intransmissible character of any achievement, we are also completely in agreement: words and other symbols are never more than a means, a support or a starting point, and nothing more; the contemplative may be absolutely incapable of translating the truth of which he is aware, and, moreover, he always realizes that any expression is inadequate. I also remind you, in this connection, that any true metaphysical conception must always allow for the inexpressible, which is even what is most important; theoretically even, there is something incommunicable there.

I wonder if all mystics would accept your interpretation of what they call "pure love"; moreover, desire, even understood in the analogical sense, cannot be identified with the will: in my thought, it was from desire and not from intelligence that the will was distinguished by the active and the passive. Moreover, desire or will are never more than an initial motor, the end being, as you say, of an intellectual order; and it must be added that, in the transcendent order, one can no longer make any distinction between faculties, as exists in the individual order. There would still be a lot to say on that, but we can talk about it again, because I hope we will have the pleasure of seeing you soon.

In the meantime, always believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our very sympathetic feelings.

Rene Guenon

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Blois, July 28, 1921,  
74 Rue de Foix.

Dear Miss, I must first

of all apologize for having taken so long to acknowledge receipt of your letter and to thank you for it; it was not possible for me to find a moment before our departure from Paris, and, although we have been here since Saturday, we are still barely settled again. I wonder if you are in Saint Germain at the moment but, as you told us that you would not be away for long, I am sending you my letter there, thinking that in any case it will be sent to you.

I was able to settle the matter with Valois before leaving; the treaty is signed, and the

conditions are about the same as those of Rivière. It is hoped that the volume will appear around the beginning of November. I have just written a few words to Maritain to tell him that everything is settled, and to ask him when I should send him my article on Theosophism, which I have not yet taken care of, but which I can prepare here.

Germain came to see us several times; we found it better, but yet it still doesn't seem very brilliant. You probably know that he is thinking of returning to Paris in September for a vacation course; as for the affair of Seine-et Marne, he finds that it is too far from the capital, and also that he will be too constrained; it is therefore to be feared that it cannot last very long, and yet it is certainly what would be best for him in all respects. - He brought us one evening his friend Rosenblum, of whom he had often spoken to us, but whom we had not seen

Again.

If you would kindly send me, as you had suggested, the issue of the review which contains Maritain's article on spiritualism, that will please me; of course I can return it to you after having read it.

Now, I'm going to ask your permission to tell you very frankly what I think of your article, or rather of certain points in this article. Naturally, I pass over the praise you addressed to me at the beginning, and for which I can only thank you. But if you certainly had the right not to take a clear position on the question of the true interpretation of Eastern doctrines, will I confess to you that I was a little surprised to see these reservations come up several times during the article? , and in terms which, no doubt to show only an excess of caution on your part, are none the less likely to be misinterpreted by some?

Was it then so necessary to spare the official Orientalists? If anyone doubts that the doctrines I expound are really Eastern, I wonder what they could be, because it seems to me that everyone must at least recognize that there is nothing Western about them, and, as for having made them from scratch, that would require an intellectual capacity which I certainly do not have.

I would then like to point out to you an omission which I wondered whether it was completely involuntary: you said nothing about my attitude with regard to the philosophical point of view, which, on the ground in which you have placed yourself , would however seem quite essential. It is a little embarrassing to see you using the expression "Hindu philosophy", or even that of "Hindu psychology" when I have precisely endeavored to show that there is no such thing. Do you remember that, at the beginning of Sylvain Lévi's report, I pointed out to you the sentence where he spoke of my work "on the philosophical systems of India", as a sign of incomprehension on his part? As this is certainly not that with you, and as I had precisely drawn your attention to this, I do not see the reasons for this confusion; would it be indiscreet to ask them? It is that such confusion sometimes leads to more serious consequences than the use of an improper expression, because it risks, on certain points, to make me say just the opposite of what I said: thus, don't you say that "I exclude morality from philosophy"? Ah no, I do not exclude her from it, on the contrary I leave it to her very willingly, and I am convinced that she can hardly go beyond this heap of theories.

heteroclit that we unite under this name of philosophy. And, on the subject of morality, allow me also to find little justification for the comparison you make with Durkheim: if it happened to him or to any other to say something right on a particular point, it seems to me that the fact that he said so does not constitute a sufficient reason for one to be biased in favor of the contrary; and it also seems to me that we have the right to recognize that an author is right on one point without showing solidarity with him in the least and even while profoundly despising all of his ideas: total error is not is it not a pure impossibility? moreover, in the present case, the agreement with Durkheim is very superficial: if he insists on the exclusively social character of morality, which undoubtedly implies the relativity of the latter, his absolute ignorance of metaphysics does not convince him. certainly not allowed to see or even to foresee the real reasons. Finally, what I think of morality, I already thought exactly at a time when I hardly knew the name of Durkheim, and when I had not the slightest idea of his conceptions; that is to tell you that I could not have been influenced by it.

To finish with the question of morality, you recognize that the notion of "dharma" is not moral in itself; that is enough for me, because the contingent applications that each can make of it do not concern me, and one cannot hold an idea responsible for the false conceptions to which it can give rise in some people. In any case, I dispute that this notion becomes moral "as soon as it is applied to the case of human nature"; it will only become so when it is deformed by conceiving it with a sentimental nuance, for it is the feeling which makes the specifically moral point of view, not the will, whatever Leibnitz may say about it, whose opinion matters as little as that of any other philosopher. - Finally, what you call the "human problem" (which is perhaps only a problem for Westerners, the same as for philosophers) can include solutions that are perfectly free of any "moralism"; moralists are free to proclaim them insufficient, probably without even trying to understand, but not to deny their existence. As for me, whatever you say, I do not deny the existence of philosophical morality, I have had only too many occasions to observe it! I only dispute that it is worth anything, which is quite different.

Another question: you say like me that "metaphysics cannot progress in itself", but you add that "it can progress in the mind of a metaphysician".

It seems to me that what progresses in this case is simply the understanding of the man in question, and metaphysical truth is in no way affected by it; to say that it is then metaphysics that progresses is to reverse the relations. It should also be added that the extension of knowledge in this field very often proceeds in a discontinuous way; this is a consequence of this intuitive character that you seem to contest, but which exists all the same... A comment contains nothing more than the text, and, if we need it, it is because of the imperfection of our intellectual conditions at least at the beginning, for there is a point beyond which not only the commentary, but the text itself becomes useless.

As for the role that you attribute to "men of genius", you will allow me to remain very skeptical about its importance and about the results that can be expected from the conceptions of such people when certain data are lacking; I will persist

always looking at the vast majority of "great philosophers" as vulgar ignoramuses with regard to the only things that interest me, and which have nothing to do with "profane" science.

You reproach me with establishing too deep a separation within human knowledge; I would rather fear that I have not succeeded in showing it as profound as it really is. To tell the truth, I don't know if one can still speak of "human" knowledge when it comes to metaphysics; if by "human" we mean exclusively the individual being, we certainly cannot. But, on the other hand, it is not at all about angels in all this; if it happens that what theology says of angels is metaphysically true of supra-individual states of being, that is a very remarkable concordance, which would perhaps need to be explained, but against the existence of which no one can do anything, any more than one can do that true and complete knowledge does not imply the effective identity of the knower and the known, independently of any subtlety of philosophical interpretation. Too bad if certain truths are embarrassing for those who are afraid of going too far, they cannot be forced to conceive these truths, but they do not have the right to deny them for that reason and yet that is what they most commonly do, behaving in this like the positivists; this is an effect of what I call "the spirit of the system". When I speak of those people who fear everything that seems to them too high or too low, who seek to maintain a middle position in everything, I cannot help thinking of that unfortunate Delbos, who was a striking example of this; I amused myself by calling this a "bourgeois conception of philosophy"; Basically, it is perhaps the philosophical mind itself that is made in this way... In any case, Thomism as you present it (of course, when I say you, it's not just you personally that it is) can make a somewhat analogous impression: it is not, for me, "a summit between two errors", but rather a partial truth which remains halfway. I add that Thomism itself, though certainly metaphysically incomplete, is yet perhaps not so narrowly limited as some of its current interpreters claim. What I find quite astonishing is to see you attributing to human intelligence a truly extraordinary power, and which I absolutely deny it: that of "going beyond the truth"; if you say that man can conceive more than what is, you simply do it, without suspecting it, superior to God! Admit that the "hyperintellectualism" that you denounce (and which is in reality only pure intellectualism), if he equals it only to the angels (and even then it is not as a human individual), is really modest...

I do not want to insist on the confusion of the intellect and the reason, nor on that of the universal and the general; we have often spoken of it already, and I only see in it the effects of the tendency which seeks to reduce metaphysics to the limitations of the philosophical point of view. I don't do any "theory of knowledge", whatever you say, and the Hindus don't do any either, they are content with knowledge itself; this kind of theory must be left to philosophers, and especially to modern philosophers. It is quite true that I cannot admit that all knowledge (including that of the metaphysical order) comes from the senses; but, for those who have only knowledge of sensory origin (there is no doubt some), it is not

it is no one's power to make them understand what knowledge of another kind is, any more than it is possible to make nominalists like Poerkeley understand what a true general idea is; this is a question of a more or less extended "intellectual horizon". Metaphysics is not "an abstract science" it is not even just "a science", it is "knowledge" par excellence. Moreover, it is of course understood that the universal is in all things, but it is still necessary to know how to recognize it there, and it is there that intellectual intuition necessarily intervenes. - Man, you say again in the same passage, "is both simpler and more complex"; I do not understand very well. It seems to me that you are simplifying it terribly (I am speaking here of the generality of Westerners) by considering only two elements in all and for all; but, on this too, the recognition of reality seems to me preferable to all philosophical theories.

You reproach me for neglecting certain distinctions; it is that I think either that these distinctions are unfounded, or at least that they do not have the importance that you attribute to them. When I can avoid some complication, I am very happy; Obviously, this attitude is quite the opposite of that of philosophers, who generally excel in creating artificial problems. In the same way, I find useless, except exceptions, the use of any complicated or too special terminology; it seems to me in particular, and without wanting to give advice to anyone, that the scholastics would gain a great deal by reserving their terminology for didactic treatises and by trying everywhere else to translate it into plain language. The inherent difficulties of understanding are good enough without adding more, and no one should have to learn a special language to be able to understand certain ideas. It's not about trying to put ideas within everyone's reach, because you know very well that I hate popularization; but I think that those who are really capable of understanding are not necessarily the most capable of retaining more or less extraordinary words; moreover, if it were otherwise, the intellectual nullity of most scholars would not be well explained.

As for the relations of metaphysics and logic, what you say about them does not persuade me to modify in any way my way of seeing; here again, it is the question of intellectual intuition that makes all the difference between us. On the other hand, a notion which in no way participates in the nature of the thing would be absolutely false; the notion is not properly an "intermediary" between the subject and the object, it would rather be their point of contact, or that in which their natures coincide (even in the lowest degrees of knowledge, where this coincidence, of course, does not go very far; but the notion is only true insofar as the coincidence exists); and it seems to me that, despite everything, this is not very far from Aristotle's thought. - Perhaps you are right, to a certain extent, to link the possibility of conceiving what is "beyond being" to the essential independence of metaphysics with regard to logic; but there is much to be said about that. In any case, I can assure you that the refusal to identify the infinite with being indeed concerns being understood as you do, and not only in a "univocal" way: Universal being (and not general) is the first of all determinations, but it is still a determination, therefore a limitation. - I'm not sure the

Aristotle's notion of "pure act" is perfectly equivalent to the idea of infinity; apart from this point which should be examined more closely, we agree on the non-existence of this idea of infinity among the Greeks before the Alexandrian period, that is to say before a closer contact directly with the Orientals made it known to them, which proves that they were incapable of attaining it by themselves.

You say that the question of pantheism is perhaps more complex than I think, that's not quite it, but this point is still one of those on which I wanted to cut short any subtlety. The word "pantheism" being one of those most abused, it was necessary to delimit its meaning very clearly, which could only be done by confining it to the philosophical domain, where it has born and from which it should never have been brought out. - I do not quite understand the distinction you want to make when you say that you mean "personal" in the philosophical and not theological sense; if there is really an appreciable difference there, this distinction will oblige me to make another one and to tell you that, for my part, I have not heard it in either of these two meaning, but in the metaphysical sense, which has a completely different meaning. It is very true that the triplicity of the principal aspects of Ishwara which constitutes the Trimurti does not correspond to the Christian Trinity, but I have not claimed that either. There is something else in the Hindu doctrine which has much more to do with the Trinity; only, I did not speak of it at all, and with intention. Now, do you agree that the Trimurti is constituted by three aspects of the Word? If so, this is another point on which we will agree.

Here's something else I don't understand: "For Orientals, you say, there is something inexpressible, but no mystery." For them and for me, mystery and inexpressible are precisely one and the same thing; and the primitive and etymological meaning of the word "mystery" seems to prove us right. If this same word has come to mean for some something inconceivable, it simply proves that those who gave it this meaning were indeed incapable of conceiving what they could not express or at least represent by a any picture. If you say there is the "unknowable", you are with Spencer and the positivists; those who take this attitude are only logical in concluding from this that metaphysics does not exist, for them at least, because that obviously does not prevent it from existing in oneself, and also for others. - You then seem to confuse "immutability" and "immobility"; then you say that the Orientals "believe that they have reached perfect knowledge". No, those who have reached it know it, in a certain way, and, as for the others, they know at least where they can find this knowledge, provided they have the intellectual means; is there in the West something equivalent to this? Similarly, the Hindu sages (the true ones of course, those who are complete sages) do not tend to realize their knowledge, they actually realize it (without which, moreover, this knowledge itself would remain imperfect and insufficient); I would gladly say that there is a question of fact here, if the word "fact" were not most ordinarily restricted to the experimental domain, which is in no way at issue here. Of course, there is much more than "fleeting glimmers of eternity" here; what a being has achieved constitutes for him a permanent acquisition, which nothing can ever cause him to lose, and that if

incomplete and however partial its realization may have been. It is not permissible to speak here of "philosophico-mystical error"; first of all, it's very inappropriate when it comes to people who have nothing mystical about them and for whom the philosophical point of view is non-existent; I maintain the meaning which I have given to the word "mystical", and, unless this word can be applied indiscriminately to anything, what is purely intellectual cannot be either mystical or pseudo-mystical, because that, first of all, he can be neither religious nor pseudo-religious (and whoever says mystical necessarily means religious by that very fact, or else, once again, the words no longer mean anything). Then, if what it is about could be "bewilderment" or "illusion", it could be just as well to think that 2 and 2 make 4, because there are no more than certainty in this case than in the other; you fully agree with the skeptics, who alone would have the right to express themselves thus. Moreover, it is always an extremely serious thing, when one is in the presence of a truly traditional doctrine, to want to tax it with "error" or to express oneself with regard to it in a disrespectful way; Catholics have less than anyone else the right to adopt such an attitude, since they also claim a doctrine which has a traditional character (and this is what gives it its value); by doing so they would expose themselves to being treated in the same way by the representatives of other doctrines, if the latter were animated by a similar spirit of exclusivism (this is not the case, it is true, but this is not the case). is not a reason to take advantage of it). It is surprising that we do not seem to think about this, and then, finally, admitting that there is reason to discuss (and there is reason as long as one has not arrived at the perfect understanding of a doctrine) , can't we do it without insulting? (I am thinking on this subject of Father Mainage, taking the pretext of his lectures on theosophism to insult the Hindus in the most odious way, while showing the most perfect ignorance of their doctrines.) There are methods of discussion which, even in the eyes of incompetent people, provided only that they are disinterested in the matter, do not at all give the impression that one is right, nor even that one is very sure of oneself...

To come back to the realization, you say that its term is "essentially supernatural": I am willing to accept this way of speaking, even though it may lend itself to ambiguity; and even setting aside all subtlety of interpretation, what is truly metaphysical, being "beyond nature" by definition, can indeed only be said to be "supernatural". You declare that this term cannot be attained "without the aid of grace"; it is possible, but are you sure that this help is lacking, simply because what it is about is not called the same way in all languages? And again the word "grace", apart from the disadvantage that it usually has of being taken in an acceptation that is too little metaphysical, is one of the closest translations available to Western languages for the Sanskrit word "prasâda"; you will then tell me that I was wrong not to mention this, but I did not claim to give a complete presentation, and there are many other things no less important that I also had to pass over in silence. . Finally, you claim that the final goal of realization cannot be reached "by the processes of metaphysics"; do you know them then? I allow myself to put it formally in doubt, and it seems to me that you are much less prudent here than when it was a question of pronouncing yourselves on the authentic character of the doctrines which I exposed.

As for the reservations that Brahmanism would require "from the point of view of the Catholic faith" you are very wrong to think that "that goes without saying"; it is so only for those who stick to common and superficial notions about it (refer to what I said about the attitude of the Jesuits in China in the seventeenth century). Here again there is a confusion of points of view, and in this respect it would be necessary to return to the definition of religion, a point which you have not dealt with. If it were necessary at all costs to establish a comparison between two doctrines which are not placed on the same ground, the one which can admit the coexistence of the other without being embarrassed by it would seem to me to have the advantage, because that proves that it can have all the truth that the other has, with something more. Do you know that many Hindus, among the most strictly orthodox (the others hardly count), put Christ in a place of honor in their homes? On the other hand, I know that there are eminent Catholics who are far from sharing your view and finding the so-called incompatibilities which seem to frighten you; if I had the right to say everything, I could even invoke the authority of a cardinal who died only a few years ago... It seems to me, moreover, that you have a tendency, perhaps to be unfortunate, to identify all of Catholicism with Thomism, and even more exactly, with a certain interpretation of Thomism, which I well know is not that of all scholastics or all theologians.

I come to your last paragraph: you say that "it is from its own Tradition that the West will find the strength to reform itself"; for my part, I do not remember having said anything else, and I do believe that there is something very similar to that in my conclusion. I would add, it is true, that to make up for what is metaphysically incomplete in the West, it would be necessary to address the East, but it is understood that this concerns only the elite. Moreover, under current conditions, it is highly unlikely that the West will still be able to return to its own Tradition on its own and without any help; it is precisely here that the elite in question should intervene, with the support of the East. It is sometimes necessary to resign oneself to having allies who cannot be subordinates, not to admit that seems to me more proud than what you are trying to stigmatize with this epithet. On this subject, I do not know if I understood the expression "to teach the proud wisdom of the East"; if it really means what I believe, it is still an illusion which must be renounced: convince yourself that the West has nothing to teach the East (except in the purely material, which the East does not want to hear about). And there is no "pride" there: Eastern wisdom (I might as well say wisdom purely and simply) is entirely free from all sentimentality, pride and humility are equally foreign to it... and indifferent to it. .

Finally, your last sentence contains a misunderstanding which deeply amazed me, where could you have discovered that I propose "a Hindu renovation of ancient Gnosis, mother of heresies"? If you take the word "Gnosis" in its true sense, that of "pure knowledge", as I always do when I happen to use it (and this is the sense in which it is found, for example, in certain Fathers of the Church), I would certainly not have to protest against the intention of "renovating knowledge" with the help of Hindu doctrines, although I am perhaps not very qualified to claim a such result; but all the rest of your sentence does not show

only too clearly that is not what you meant at all. First, Gnosis, so understood (and I refuse to understand it otherwise) cannot be called "mother of heresies"; that would amount to saying that truth is the mother of errors; if there are human beings who misunderstand the truth, and if that is where errors arise, the truth certainly cannot be held responsible for them; it would be just as fair to speak, for example, of "Catholicism, father of Protestantism"! In fact, you are simply confusing "Gnosis" and "Gnosticism"; do you not go, in another place, to qualify both Hindu metaphysics (and thereby, basically, all that is true metaphysics) of "perfect gnosis" (which is very acceptable, since is indeed integral knowledge) and "absolute gnosticism"? I cannot bring myself to believe that you do not know what Gnosticism is historically at least; but then why this assimilation that nothing can justify? Assuredly, this is not the first time that I have encountered such confusion and that I have had to deal with it; but, until now, it was always the fact of people who, to extol gnosticism and make it pass for what it is not, decorated it unduly with the name of Gnosis; I even attracted some hatred by reproaching them... assimilating to this heterogeneous mixture which is called (or has been called) gnosticism; and yet, to avoid any misinterpretation, I have carefully refrained, throughout my work, from using this word Gnosis, despite its perfect equivalence with the Sanskrit "Jñāna", and I contented myself with that of metaphysics, which can almost always replace it without inconvenience (when this is not possible, one can speak simply of "knowledge"). a there, on my part, neither skill nor lack of frankness (your sentence could make one believe it), but only the desire to set aside all that risks being misunderstood, insofar as it is possible to foresee it; but I did not succeed, since, despite all my precautions, the false interpretation occurred all the same, and from the side where I least expected it! So clearly that one tries to write, it is to despair of making oneself understood; really, if one cannot say that morality has only a purely social scope without being assimilated to Durkheim and other sociologists nor to speak of pure intellectual knowledge without being associated with the Gnostics of all kinds, or even placed below the Theosophists and denounced as more dangerous than these evil fools, I'm beginning to believe that it would be best to simply remain silent. If it were not so annoying, it would be pleasant, for someone who defends Traditional Orthodoxy in all areas, and who does not want to know anything outside of this Orthodoxy, to see himself accused of seeking to promote heresy!! With regard especially to Gnosticism, need I say that this Greek distortion of misunderstood Oriental ideas does not interest me in the least? It is not worth much more than a philosophical system. Should I therefore have had to go and defend myself in advance, and without any reason, from wanting to institute anything? It wouldn't have occurred to me that anyone could lend me such intentions, especially since I had said that, in my conclusion, it was only a matter of very remote possibilities; moreover, if the elite of which I spoke manages to constitute itself one day, it will certainly not be by any association whatsoever; for this, means of a different order are needed

deep. In short, I did not want to say anything other than what I said, and all this proves that, by wanting to "speak frankly", as you say, we run a great risk of giving people thoughts that they have never had. This distortion of my intentions is so serious in my eyes that I will be obliged to take advantage of the earliest opportunity to formulate the necessary rectification.

Please do not see in all these reflections the mark of any bad humor; only your last sentence really struck me, and you must now understand why; the only thing that I cannot allow is that people impute ideas to me that are not mine. For everything else, moreover, it is not me personally who is in question; it is the doctrine, which I explain very imperfectly, although to the best of my ability, and which, in its essence and well above all the controversies to which it may give rise: whether we understand the truth or whether we do not understand, it matters a lot to us, but the truth is in no way affected. Perhaps I am wrong to write too clearly what I think, but I do hope that you will not be angry with me and that you will not be offended by it.

I await with some curiosity your article of the "Letters"; do you know if it will appear soon?

Please believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our most sympathetic feelings.

Rene Guenon

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Paris, November 19, 1921.

Dear Miss, It's my

turn to apologize for not having answered you yet; I, too, have been quite busy since our return to Paris, and besides, I wanted to wait to write to you until my book on Theosophism appeared, which could hardly be long in coming. It is now done, and yesterday I prepared various copies, including one for you, of course, so that you can have it without delay, I took advantage of the mailings that Valois made for the service and I had it attached; the whole probably having to leave today, I think that you will receive it about the same time as this letter.

I saw Maritain and Massis, who agree with me in asking you to take charge of the review of the work in the "Universal Review", and to take the opportunity to make the clarification that I had given you. requested. This is what Maritain had already told you, and it was Massis himself who suggested that I arrange things this way. Your letter only makes me fear that this account may not appear for some time; I understand your reasons very well, but when you wrote this to me, you no doubt thought that the book would not appear until a later date. In any case, I shall be very much obliged to you to prepare this as soon as possible; as you already know the question from my articles (although the volume is much more developed), it seems to me that this work should not take you much time.

By re-reading the last sentence of your article in "Lettres", I clearly saw that you had meant in fact what you are explaining to me, but the sentence can also be understood in the other sense, the one that I reproached you for. . It happens quite often

that we ourselves do not notice these double meanings, because, as we know very well what we intended to say, we only see that, and we do not think that the reader can find something else there.

I like to believe that you no longer feel your flu and that your fatigue is gone. You are no doubt not without coming to Paris sometimes; if one of these days you could spare an hour or two, you will give us great pleasure by coming to see us; we could talk a bit about your thesis and the various projects that seem to concern you. I had at first thought of giving you my book when I saw you, but, although I thought it would be better to have it sent to you immediately, I do hope that this will not prevent you from coming without too much delay.

Please believe, Dear Miss, in our best feelings.

Rene Guenon

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Paris, January 3, 1922

Dear Miss, If I didn't

reply to your letter, which is already more than a month ago, earlier, it's because we still thought we'd have your visit as you made us hope.

The last time I saw Maritain, he told me that Mademoiselle Bernadette was ill and that you might have to take her to the south; did you go there? We like to believe that there is nothing to worry about in her condition, and also that you are no longer feeling the effects of your two bouts of flu.

Our health is not very good either: since we came back here, we all have almost constant colds. In addition, I have been suffering from headaches all these times which must be due to the abnormal and unhealthy temperature, because many people also complain about it, and it hardly allowed me to work. However, I was able to write two articles that had been requested of me for the "Revue Bleue", one on Hindu doctrines, the other on the origins of Mormonism; this last question is currently on the agenda because of Pierre Benoît's "Lac Salé".

I hope that, as you told me, and despite your concerns, you will be able to prepare the review of my book during these holidays, so that it appears in the "Universal Review" of February. You may know that, for "Action Française", Daudet intends to write an article in which he will talk about my two works at the same time.

And your thesis, have you finally been able to get back to it a bit?

Towards the end of November, my aunt and my wife saw Germain in the town hall square; they were very surprised, but, as they were in a hurry, they could not stop him. Since then, I learned from Maritain that he had left Sedan after a month, that he had been a fortnight in Chaugy, and that he was now in Paris with an insurance company; but is it still there? We also learned, on the other hand, that he had not given any sign of life to his family since his departure from Sedan. As for us, we haven't seen it yet, and we wonder why. Admit that his way of acting is rather strange.

We do hope that you won't be long in coming to see us; we would be happy to finally talk a little with you

With our best New Year wishes to you and yours, please receive, dear Miss, the expression of our very sympathetic feelings.

Rene Guenon

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Paris, March 4, 1922

Dear Mademoiselle, I

have just seen Massis, who, like me, received your letter yesterday evening; he asked me to transmit to you the explanations he gave me. So, here's the thing in a nutshell: as Johannet only dealt with the political point of view, his article is not considered to constitute a review of my book, and it will in no way prevent yours from appearing. Massis hasn't seen your article yet, but he doesn't think (and neither do I) that you've gone into the political side of the issue; if, however, you mentioned it incidentally, he would simply ask you to delete the passage which might duplicate what has already been said. This is what he replied to Maritain, who, for his part, also wrote to him on this subject. In short, everything is working out for the best; your letter had worried me; I was wondering what could be down there, and I wanted to get the thing straight away. If I thus have two articles instead of one, I would not have to complain about it.

Johannet must also give me a report in the "Letters"; there is still nothing in the March issue, which I received this morning; it will probably be next month. On the other hand, he spoke about me in an article in the "Revue Française", still about the political undercurrents of Theosophism. I had two very good articles, one by Gonzague Truc in "Epi ion", the other by Eugène Tavernier in "Libre Parole". - These last few days, Daudet spoke again to Massis about my two volumes; he still intends to do something about it; it's a shame he's so busy.

We do hope that, despite everything you have to do, you will be able to find a few moments to come and see us before the Easter holidays, which we will be spending in Blois as usual. I hope that you will soon be able to finish your thesis; it will be one less concern for you.

As for Germain, he hasn't given us the slightest sign of life, despite his promises, since the day he came with you. One wonders if he is still in Boulogne; it's really worrying indeed.

Believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our most sympathetic feelings.

Rene Guenon

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Paris, May 24, 1922.

Dear Miss, We still

expected to see you as you had made us hope, and that is why I did not answer your letter sooner. No doubt you continue to be

very busy ; so try to find all the same a few moments to come here one of these days. I would really like to know in more detail what happened to you for your thesis with the people at the Sorbonne.

Maritain, whom I saw last week, told me that your defense at the institute would probably take place on June 17. You will be very kind to tell me if this is indeed the date fixed definitively, and also to indicate the hour to us, because we would be very happy to be able to attend.

Maritain also told me that your report was composed; so let's hope that it will still end up appearing. Thank you for having spoken to your father, before his departure, of what I had written to you about; it is really unfortunate that this exhibition in Brussels is just in the month of June.

We learned from the Dubois that Germain had passed through Paris to return to Ligny; we never hear from him directly again. It seems that he has expressed the intention of taking up his thesis; What do you think about this ?

My work on spiritualism is finished, I started the other work these days, which I must give to Payot, and I believe that I will only have time to put it on its feet before the holidays.

See you soon, I hope, dear Miss, and always believe in our best feelings

Rene Guenon

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Paris, July 3, 1922

Dear Miss, We were

very sorry not to see you last week as you had made me hope; you probably ran out of time. You are probably no longer at Saint Germain, but I do believe that my letter will reach you all the same.

I received your thesis a few days ago, and I thank you very much for it; I would have liked to be able to at least read it before writing to you, but that was not possible for me: my work was not finished. I will read it during the holidays, and I will let you know my thoughts. We would like to leave Paris as soon as possible, but I don't know yet when I will be ready; it probably won't be until July 20 at the earliest.

Yesterday, at Gonzague Truc, I saw M. Guéguen (I don't know if I spelled his name correctly), who told me about you. In this regard, I must tell you that, as it was a question of your thesis, Gonzague Truc expressed the desire to receive a copy of it in order to be able to speak about it in an article; he would surely do so, for you know that everything concerning scholasticism interests him very much. I don't know if Rivière did a press service for your book; in any case, it seems to me that you could ask him to send it, and I think that would be a good thing.

Excuse me for writing to you, for today, only these few hasty words, and always believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our best sentiments.

Rene Guenon

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Blois, September 2, 1922  
74, rue Du Foix.

Dear Miss, On receipt

of your card, I wrote to Massis, and he sent me the "Revue Universelle" by return post. I was therefore able to read your article, for which I thank you; I believe that, despite the delay in its publication, it has not ceased to be topical; perhaps it is better, moreover, that there was a certain interval between Johanne's article and yours. Your rectification for "gnosis" and "gnosticism" sets things straight; let us hope that it will dispel any ambiguity in the minds of the readers. - What you say about esotericism is more or less what I think myself; but, for my part, I will not agree to call "esotericism of principle" what is on the contrary only an esotericism of fact, I mean that which, precisely, is not justified by any consideration of principle, as this is the case with the Theosophists and the Occultists; I would even say that this is only a "pseudo-esotericism". As for the division of men into "initiates" and "uninitiated", I am convinced that it really exists, in a completely natural way, by the very force of things, and that in all areas. Perhaps this is not what you wanted to dispute; but, even in a more precise sense, I see a fairly clear difference between "initiatory" knowledge and "profane" knowledge.

It would probably be necessary to agree on the terms, which is not always easy; I will surely have more than one occasion to come back to this subject, which is not unrelated to the distinction I make between "metaphysics" and "philosophy". In your article, in any case, these are only details, and it is unlikely that readers will stop there; for everything else, we are in complete agreement.

About Theosophism, do you remember that I had spoken to you about the adhesion of Vincent d'Indy to the group of "watchmen" (ex "freedmen")? It surprised you, and you couldn't believe it. At that time, I couldn't affirm anything, because I had only been told so and there could be a mistake; but now I have the proof: his name is on the list next to that of Camille Flammarion, what do you think of that?

I have just finished reading your thesis, which greatly interested me. If you allow me to tell you frankly what I think, the appearance is perhaps a little too dense, because of the large quantity of texts that you quote; but I think you saw it yourself, and it's probably hard to avoid, given the part you gave to the historical point of view in the way you treated the subject. All the points did not seem to me to be equally cleared up and, especially in what concerns Aristotle, there sometimes seems to be a certain hesitation; and it may well be that the fault lies above all with Aristotle himself, or with the state in which his works have come down to us. - I believe that you have done very well to insist on the analogical character of the notion of power, and to distinguish, as you do, the different meanings of which it is susceptible. The distinction between "possible" and "potential" is extremely important; we could perhaps say something else on this subject than what you are saying, but that is already a lot, and I don't know if, sticking to the scholastic point of view, others had done it this way. come out before you. I also find what you say for the Infinite and the Indefinite quite good,

in particular in the paragraph relating to movement and "accidental becoming" (which moreover, in a general way, seems to me clearer than the one which precedes it and which concerns matter and "substantial becoming"). - Speaking of material, let me point out a detail that is perhaps not unimportant. On page 36, you say the following: The genus "animal" could exist "as matter" if there existed a determined chemical substance from which all living things would come". You take the word "matter" in its full sense completely modern, and I do not at all believe that this explanation is in conformity with the thought of Aristotle which you seek to clarify in this passage. in this single sentence. --You are very right to point out certain confusions which are sources of almost inextricable difficulties, such as the double meaning of the word "substance" (I cannot understand how this word could have been taken to translate (ὑπόστασις) and above all the confusion of the general and the universal. For the latter, I particularly approve of what you say on page 44; you have done very well to bring it closer to the confusion of the potential and the possible, which also seems to exist in Aristotle. Only you unite the logical and psychological points of view a little too much, which, for me, are very different. On the other hand (and moreover the two things go hand in hand), you separate too much the logical point of view from the ontological point of view; you must admit, however, that there is at least a correspondence between the two, without which the first would hardly be valid, and one would risk giving reason to some extent for the relativism of the moderns.

One thing that seems very strange to me (but this reproach is not addressed to you) is the assimilation of knowledge to a movement, even by extending the meaning of this last word as much as one will want. Likewise, I can see only disadvantages in enlarging the meaning of the word "action" in such a way as to include knowledge; for me, there is something annoying in the Aristotelian and scholastic vocabulary, which, despite all the distinctions that can be introduced secondarily, is likely to give rise to many ambiguities. When we separate knowledge and action as the Eastern doctrines do, it is quite clear! Moreover, everything that proceeds from Greek thought (despite the corrections that have been made and of which I recognize all the value), always gives me the impression of being unnecessarily complicated and encumbered with rather vain subtleties, in the midst of which there is often a risk of losing sight of the essential. There is really too much "analysis" in there... and yet Aristotle does not have Plato's verbiage. -- It does not seem to me that you have succeeded in sufficiently clarifying the conception of the "agent intellect"; it is true that this is very difficult, and I even think that it is not possible if we limit ourselves to strictly Western points of view. The expression "faculty of the soul" (page 160) is much more vague than you seem to suppose; Doesn't the word "soul" itself have a plurality of irreducible meanings? Even if we take it exclusively as equivalent to ψυχή, it is not always easy to see exactly what is meant by this; in any case, the ψυχή is generally regarded as superior to the σώμα not as being part of it; but this question would lead us very far. What is quite correct is that "reasoning is a sign of intellectual inferiority" (page 162);

but would it not be appropriate to reserve the name "concepts" only for general ideas, to the exclusion of universal (or transcendental) ideas? On the other hand, there is a considerable difference between general ideas and abstract ideas, which I do not see that you take into account; I know the confusion is common, but it is just as serious as some of those you rightly protest against. -- I may still have a few other thoughts to submit to you, but I will stop there for today, not without repeating to you all the interest I have taken in reading your work.

I have just received the beginning of the trials of "The Spiritualist Error"; I'm happy about it because, with Rivière, I'm always afraid that things will drag on.

Please believe, dear Miss, in our best feelings

Rene Guenon

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October 30, 1922

Dear Mademoiselle It

has already been nearly a fortnight since I received the book from Fr. Wallace that you sent back to me, and I am really confused that I could not find another moment to acknowledge receipt. I must tell you that I was asked to take charge of the philosophy class at the Franks-Bourgeois school, and that I accepted, especially since it's very close to here. So we've been back in Paris for a month already, but I've been all the more busy so far as I've had to correct the proofs of the "Spiritual Error"; it is nearly finished now, and I hope the volume can appear sometime in November.

Some time ago I received a letter from M. Mayer, telling me that I had gotten my address from you, and asking me to fix an appointment with him to talk to me about a project for universal ideographic writing. I saw it ; his idea seems interesting to me, but I wonder what it will give to the application. Anyway, he left me a pamphlet that I'll examine more at my leisure when I have some free time, and then we'll talk about it.

Will we have the pleasure of seeing you soon? If you always come to Paris on Fridays, I'm free the afternoon of that day. In any case, we hope that you will not delay in giving us your news.

Please believe, dear Mademoiselle, in our best feelings.

Rene Guenon

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Paris, March 6, 1923

Dear Madam,

After sending my congratulations to Saint Germain on the occasion of your marriage, I waited to send them directly to you, still hoping to meet you; and that's what explains to you why I'm so late to tell you about this great event that we weren't thinking of, since we believed you

still in the Allier. Now that you are almost our neighbor, we hope to have the pleasure of seeing you soon and getting to know Mr. Boulet. As usual, we will be away during the Easter holidays, and we will be back the first days of the Quasimodo week.

My book on spiritualism is finally going to appear these days; I was very annoyed by the delay of the printers: if everything had worked normally, it should have been ready in November.

Do not be surprised by my black paper: we have been in mourning for some days, of the father of our little Françoise who had been ill for so long.

Our very sincere congratulations to Monsieur Boulet, and for you, dear Madame, always believe in our best memory.

Rene Guenon

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Paris, October 30, 1923.

Dear Madame,

what must you think of my silence? I'm really confused seeing that your card is already two months old! I think you must have returned to Clermont; but, not having your exact address, I am sending this letter to Saint Germain, and I am sure that in this way it will reach you.

My aunt was very ill and had to undergo an emergency operation in July; she recovered very well, very fortunately, but we were only able to leave here on August 10th. Also the holidays have passed very quickly, and that is why it was not possible for me to answer you right away. On the other hand, I found myself quite tired at the end of the school year, but now we are all healthy.

We were happy to hear from you, and we like to believe that Mr. Boulet's condition has continued to improve. We do hope that you will not forget your promise to come and see us this winter, for you will no doubt come to Paris from time to time. I would be happy to talk to you again about the things that interest us.

My volume "Orient et Occident" has not yet appeared, and yet, if everything had gone normally, it should have been ready in June. But you always have to reckon with the negligence of the printers: I was weeks without receiving the rest of the proofs, so much so that the last ones only reached me during the holidays.

It should therefore finally be able to appear now, but now Payot is making me wait again, in turn, under the pretext of finding out what will be the most favorable moment for the launch; he always promises me an answer which he is in no hurry to give me. This is all really boring!

I hope to start a new job soon, but I'm not sure what this will be ; these are not the topics that are missing...

My pupils were almost all received in July, but, in spite of that, I did not resume my class at the Francs-Bourgeois; I will tell you this story when we have the pleasure of seeing you. For the moment I only have one lesson for young girls; I wish I could have two or three of the same kind, that's

less painful than a class and safer than lessons. I have spoken of it in various quarters, but, so far, I have not yet found; If by chance you know of something like this, you would be very kind to let me know.

Please, dear Madame, offer our best memories to Monsieur Boulet, and believe in our warmest feelings.

Rene Guenon

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***René Guénon in Pistoni***

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Cairo, May 25, 1949.  
(Poste restante, central office)

Sir, I have

only just received your letter sent by the Gallimard editions, because the correspondence between Europe and Egypt is currently very slow and above all very irregular. -- You don't need to apologize for writing to me in Italian because, if I don't write it myself because I'm not used to it, I at least understand it just as easily as French.

The price of the subscription to the review "Traditional Studies" is 750 francs; as to what has appeared since it resumed publication after the war (in October 1945) I was told quite a long time ago that the first two years were out of print, but I don't know what it is Exactly. As you will easily understand, the distance at which I find myself does not allow me to take care of these things, and besides, in reality, I am only one of the regular contributors to the journal and have no part in its administration. It is therefore necessary, for all this, that you apply directly to Mr. Paul Chacornac, bookseller publisher, 11, quai Saint Michel, Paris (5°).

I will also point out to you, in case you have not been aware of it until now, the review "Studi Iniziatici", directed by Mr. Corrado Rocco and published in Naples, via S. Bartolomeo, 47.

As far as Gallimard editions are concerned, the next volume to appear in the "Tradition" collection, and which moreover is almost ready now, is "Hindouisme et Bouddhisme", by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. Then will come a second work by F. Schuon, "L'Oeil du Coeur", the manuscript of which has already been delivered to the publisher; but I could not tell you when it will appear, because, because of the difficulties due to the current situation, and which moreover are more or less the same in all countries, all editions are going much more slowly than one would wish .

I think that you probably know that one of my books, "Considerazioni sulla Via iniziatica" (Translation of the "Aperçu sur l'Initiation"), appeared a few months ago at the Bocca editions, in your very city; Italian translations of several other works of mine are also currently in progress.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

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Cairo, June 19, 1949.

Dear Sir, I have

just received your letter of June 9, meanwhile, M. Rocco had also told me that you had recently gone to see him in Naples; I'm glad you got to know him directly, because he can certainly give you information on a lot of things.

Among those of my books that you would like to have now, there are several that are out of print, and it seems that it is impossible to find them now; but,

"East and West", "Spiritual Authority", (of which Mr. Rocco is at present finishing the translation) and the "Multiple States of Being" were reissued last year, and the "Symbolism of the Cross" must be soon; as for the "Grande Triade", which is the last published work, it still exists. To obtain all my books, it is best to always go to the Chacornac bookshop, which has on deposit those which have appeared with different publishers; it is in fact much simpler to only have to do this to a single library.

I can only entirely approve of what you say for the practice of Catholic exotericism, because I myself have insisted on the need for traditional exotericism, both for those who want to go further and for others. The only drawback in this case is that Catholicism, at least in its present state, does not seem to leave any door open, so to speak, to esotericism and initiation. -- The interpretation that you envisage on the other hand in connection with Catholicism would be justified if this word could be taken in its etymological sense, since this expresses an idea of universality; but, in fact, what bears this name of Catholicism is quite another thing: it is indeed only a particular form of tradition, and which moreover is strictly limited to the exoteric point of view. For the rest, one only has to see what exclusivism its representatives show with regard to other traditions; I do not believe that, except in Judaism, it can be found elsewhere in such an accentuated degree. -- I would certainly not want to replace Mr.

Schuon for the interpretation of what he wrote, especially with regard to Christianity, which often raises many difficult and more or less obscure questions; but, as regards the passage you quote, it seems to me that it is very clear and that there is nothing to look for in it other than what it expresses formally and which applies to all forms of traditional exotericism both to Catholicism and to others. I would add that the case of Catholicism is far from being the only example of a word that the use that has been made of it has completely diverted from its original meaning in such a way that it is no longer possible to return to this one. -- I don't think it can be said that Mr. Schuon knows Orthodox Christianity any better; but the truth is that he thinks, and with reason from all I have been able to learn, that certain things have been preserved there until now, the equivalent of which has long since ceased to exist. in the Latin Church.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, July 24, 1949.

Dear Sir, Your

two letters reached me almost at the same time, and I apologize for not having been able to reply to them immediately; I have a lot of late correspondence at the moment, and it is not always easy for me to keep it up to date as I would like, because time too often fails me to get to everything.

Unfortunately, it would be very difficult for me to give you an opinion on the considerations you set out in your letter to Mr Schuon, and this for two main reasons, the first of which is that, as I believe I have already told you, it

It is not for me to answer questions asked about what has been written by someone else, and that, not knowing exactly what Mr. Schuon himself may think of it, he does not. It's really not possible to replace him in any way in this case, or to give you an answer which might perhaps risk not entirely agreeing with his, for lack of seeing clearly enough on what precise points the objections raised relate by you. The second reason is this: I must say that these considerations, in themselves, do not seem entirely clear to me, perhaps partly because they relate to a point of view that I do not have. usual to consider, but no doubt also because there is really in Christianity, and especially with regard to its original character, something which is very obscure and difficult to specify, and which even seems to have been obscured intentionally ; you must have noticed, moreover, that when I happened to have to touch a little on these questions, I never did so except with the greatest reserve. If it does not seem doubtful that original Christianity had above all the characteristics of an esotericism, it is no less certain that it lost them very early, whatever the reasons, and that it has come to lose them so completely that Catholicism in particular, in its present state, is the most rigid and exclusive exotericism that one can conceive, so much so that its representatives expressly deny the very existence of any esotericism, something of which there is perhaps no example in any other tradition (even the Jews do not deny the Kabbalah, even when they recognize that they understand nothing about it or do not want to concern themselves with it).

Of course, this does not prevent the deep and esoteric meaning from existing, but it is entirely outside the domain in which the Christian religion as such intends to confine itself voluntarily or involuntarily, and its Western form even more exclusively than its Eastern forms. , which always leave at least a possibility of going beyond the exoteric point of view, which current Catholicism, on the contrary, does not want to admit in any way.

As for the distinction between exotericism and esotericism, what you say in your last letter seems correct to me in a certain sense, but one can also mark more clearly their difference both by their domain and by their goal: the domain of exotericism is always that of human individuality (with its indefinite extensions), whereas, for esotericism, it is on the contrary essentially a question of going beyond this, even though it takes it as a starting point and necessary support; the goal of exotericism is "salvation" (still individual state), while the ultimate goal of esotericism is "Deliverance" or "Supreme Identity", i.e. the state absolutely unconditioned.

The question of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity is certainly much more complex than what you envisage, because that would not explain the persistent existence of the Judaic tradition up to our days, which nevertheless must also have its reason for being ; but this is a subject that would probably lead very far...

I regret not being able to give you more complete satisfaction for this time, and I beg you, dear Sir, to believe in my best feelings.

RG

Cairo, September 5, 1949.

Dear Sir, It has

been some time since I received your letter of August 8, and I apologize for not having been able to reply to it sooner; I have so much correspondence that I often have great difficulty in keeping it more or less up to date.

You are certainly right in wanting to study the Catholic tradition as deeply as possible, since it is yours; but unfortunately, as regards finding in Catholicism, such as it currently is in fact, an effective possibility of going beyond exotericism, this is something which seems to me extremely doubtful, to put it mildly. .

The objection raised by your friend against the necessity of a regular initiatic attachment, at least in certain cases, only shows in him an incomprehension of the cyclical laws and of the conditions which result from them. As long as the Kali-Yuga lasts (and it is quite obvious that we are still there), the "descent" continues, and even in a more and more accentuated and rapid way, until the final catastrophe. The return to origins occurs, by a kind of instantaneous "reversal", at the very beginning of the next cycle, and not in a gradual way during the current cycle. The possibility in question therefore does not exist in the latter periods, and even the mere qualification for initiation becomes ever more and more rare there; that is the whole answer to this argument.

I'm surprised you didn't get any response about books and magazines, but if you've been to Paris lately as you intended, I hope you've been able to find everything you want there without difficulty. to have.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, September 22, 1949.

Dear Sir, I

received your letter of September 12 last week. -- I think, from what you tell me, that you understood well that your friend's argument was not valid, by the very fact that we are still in Kali-Yuga and that, as long as it will last, the spiritual obscuration can only continue to increase.

It goes without saying that, by this very fact, the initiates (I mean naturally the actual initiates) will always be fewer and fewer, as you say; but I do not understand why some, while being truly qualified, would in fact find themselves, even under the most unfavorable circumstances, unable to receive initiation in any of the traditional forms in which they still exist...

As for finding in Catholicism a means of going beyond exotericism, there would have to be an initiation based on this exoteric form which is Catholicism itself; this is obviously not impossible in principle, and there must have been some in the middle ages, but unfortunately I very much doubt that any still exist today, or else they are so hidden and limited to a number of members so restricted that they are practically inaccessible; it's not there

only a de facto situation, of course, but we are nevertheless obliged to take it into account.

I do not see at all why or how the difficulty would only begin with regard to the "great mysteries", because only one can approach these who has first of all walked the entire path of the "small mysteries". The "primordial state" is perfection and the end of the "little mysteries", and it seems quite obvious to me that, before reaching it (and passing from there to the "great mysteries"), it is necessary to have passed through the preceding degrees, and, first and foremost, having received the first initiation giving entry to the domain of the "lesser mysteries". I therefore do not see how a question relating to the "primordial state" could pose for someone who has not even received this first initiation yet, nor what interest it could present under these conditions, because, in this as in all things, one cannot claim to begin with the end.

I regret that my answers are probably not as satisfactory as you would have liked, and I beg you, dear Sir, to believe in my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, September 29, 1949.

Dear Sir, I

received your letter of September 17 shortly after having replied to the previous one, and you will see that I was precisely quite surprised by the sentence to which you return. I thank you for the explanations you have given me on this subject, but I must frankly say that they seem to me to be far from being entirely clear. -- I notice first of all that, when you speak of "traditions of family, race, etc. ", you use this word tradition in a sense which is in fact often given to it in current language, but which I absolutely refuse to accept; for us, in fact, as I have often explained, this name can only legitimately be given to what is essentially characterized by the presence of a supra-human element, which obviously is not the case here. . -- On the other hand, all that you say about the integration of traditional elements, even insofar as it is really a question of religious tradition, remains entirely within the limits of the exoteric realm and therefore has absolutely nothing in common with the "little mysteries". It is possible that one can thereby, in the most favorable case, obtain certain "mystical" states or something comparable to these, but not, most certainly, the restoration of the "primordial state". . It is moreover to be feared that, in fact, the results are most often only of a psychological or "subjective" order, that is to say completely non-existent and illusory from the point of view of a realisation. any. -- There is surely in all this much more than mere questions of terminology; Basically, I see above all a confusion between exotericism and esotericism, which you should above all endeavor to dissipate so that we can manage to understand each other better...

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

Cairo, November 8, 1949.

Dear Sir, I

received your letter of October 25; I see that you have not realized your plan to go to Paris, but it is to be hoped that, without needing to make this trip, you will be able to have those of my books sent to you which you miss, or at least those which you It is possible to obtain currently, because there are some that are out of print and have not yet been reissued.

I understand that the questions you told me about require reflection and meditation, and it is not surprising that there are things in all of this that do not yet seem perfectly clear to you. -- Although you are not asking me for an answer this time, there are nevertheless one or two points to which I would like to draw your attention. First of all, for the meaning that is commonly given to the word "tradition", and in particular when one speaks of "tradition of family, race, etc. ", as you did in a previous letter, it seems to me very doubtful that what we have in view can be considered as representing even degenerate remnants of the true tradition; they are rather simple "customs", that is to say something purely human and which has never been anything more than that. The remains or the "spoils" of tradition are what the word "superstition" properly designates, understood in its etymological sense, and this is something quite different. -- On the other hand, it is true that it is necessary, in a certain way, to cross the psychic domain to go beyond; but this cannot really be considered as a preparation for attaining the spiritual, but only as something inevitable in fact, and in any case it is dangerous to dwell on it. On the contrary, we must constantly aim beyond, without allowing ourselves to be diverted from the path which should lead to the spiritual; it is only then that one can approach the psychic from above and descend there again without having any more danger to fear, if this still presents an interest for whatever reasons.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, January 22, 1950.

Dear Sir, I have

just received your wedding announcement, which crossed with my reply to your last letter. As I see that it is already almost a month old, I do not want to wait to have received another letter from you to express my congratulations and my best wishes on this occasion.

I send this note to the address which is indicated in the middle of your announcement, because I suppose well, according to that, that this address must now be yours.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

.....

Cairo, February 12, 1950.

Dear Sir, I have

just received your letter of February 2; I fully understand that your marriage and your new installation must not have allowed you to write or study all these days, but at least this is an impediment which is only due to happy circumstances! -- I see that in short one can write to you indifferently to one or the other of the two addresses indicated; of course I didn't know that you kept the old one for your office.

I am happy to learn that you have finally been able to receive some of my books from Paris, and also several years of "ET"; these must probably be the only ones that are not completely exhausted yet.

As for my articles on "Christianity and Initiation", which do indeed have a certain relationship with the questions we have previously discussed, let me know when you have regained a little more calm, which you think you will need. clarification; I will gladly give them to you as far as I can. I must moreover say frankly that there are many points in this which remain obscure in spite of everything and on which it would be very difficult to make precise assertions (for example the changes which have occurred at certain times in the ritual of the sacraments, because we do not know exactly what this one was in primitive Christianity, and there are many other things on which we are not better informed). What is even singular is that the closer one tries to examine all this, the more one discovers unexpected complications and difficulties, so that it is very doubtful that everything can ever be completely elucidated... This is why I hesitated for a long time before writing these articles, and I only decided to do so because I found myself in a way obliged to do so by the questions and reflections of numerous correspondents; I don't yet know if there will be any reason to come back to this subject a little later, and that will undoubtedly depend above all on what people who are better placed than me to do certain research, for which it would be necessary to besides being able to have a lot of time.

Please, pay my respects to Madame Pistoni, and accept my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, March 26, 1950.

Dear Sir, It is

already quite a long time since I received your letter of February 14, but this time it was not possible for me to reply to it sooner, having been continually taken up lately by various urgent matters. . -- I was glad to know that your health had improved, and I trust that since that time you have fully recovered.

What I said in my articles about the permanence of the initiatory character in the rites responded directly to an objection which had been presented in this form by one of my correspondents. Of course, this is only one side of

the question ; but, on the other hand, I must point out to you that I did not say that the original character of Christianity had been "lost", since it is a question of a change which, owing to the conditions of the Western world , had a distinctly providential character. For initiates to transmit what they have received, it is obviously necessary that they have the intention (and this even in the case where it is a matter of simple virtual initiates who are not clearly aware of the true nature of what it is about). The Christian initiates could very well, from a certain moment, cease to have this intention, and that not on their own initiative, since there was a providential action, but, according to the language of the Christian tradition, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, it is not proven that the rites themselves did not then undergo certain more or less important modifications; This is a very difficult question to answer in a precise way, but there are at least indications that such modifications did in fact occur during the first centuries of Christianity. -- I would add in this connection that the desired cessation of an initiatic transmission is not something absolutely exceptional; currently, certain initiations are precisely on the point of being extinguished following a decision not to transmit them any more to anybody, for reasons which are related to the conditions of the cyclical period in which we are; I know a particular case here among the Copts.

Between the "exteriorization" of Christianity, or what one might call its "descent" into the exoteric realm, and the appearance of mysticism, a fairly large number of centuries have elapsed, so that the question you were considering about it may not actually arise.

The being who obtained "salvation" did not actually achieve anything; he has only acquired a virtuality which will allow him to arrive at a certain realization in the course of his posthumous states; this realization, being situated in the extensions of the human state, must naturally lead to the "primordial state", but it can be deferred until the end of the current cycle.

The "divinification" to use the expression you use, necessarily implies the exit from the Cosmos (that is to say from the manifested world); it cannot therefore consist in a harmonization with the cosmic rhythm, and this can only be in any case a simple preparatory stage. -- Furthermore, what you say about the presence of beings whose function is in some way to "restore balance" is certainly correct, and I would even add that, if there were none constantly, the world would soon end. According to Islamic tradition, there is such a being who, each year, takes upon himself three quarters of the evils that must arise in this world...

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

.....

Cairo, May 9, 1950.

Dear Sir, It has

been a week since I received your letter of April 17, but so far I have not been able to find a few moments to reply to it. -- About

remarks made by your friend, I quite agree with him in thinking that initiation is more necessary than ever, but on the condition of adding: for those who are really qualified to receive it; now it is a fact that these are less and less numerous, and this is why it is natural that the initiatory organizations close more and more, especially if we consider that those which have remained too easily accessible suffered thereby a certain degeneration more or less accentuated according to the case. On the other hand, if it is possible now to expose certain things more easily than in other times, it is because in the past they might have been misunderstood by many, whereas today they only risk not being understood at all, which is much less serious and less dangerous, since most people pay no attention to them and they are for them as if they did not exist; it is therefore quite erroneous to speak in this of "disclosure", these things being on the contrary exclusively intended to serve as an indication to the very few of those who are still able to benefit from them; there is therefore nothing contradictory in reality. -- Since the name of J. Evola was mentioned incidentally, you no doubt know that, despite the undeniable interest of his work, I have always been obliged to make very serious reservations on certain points which, with him, do not are not in accordance with traditional orthodoxy.

To come to your own question, there is no doubt that there was a specifically Christian esotericism throughout the Middle Ages (there may even still be vestiges of it, especially in the Eastern Churches). you are quite right to quote Meister Eckhart in this respect, and there are others whom it is wrong to take today for "mystics". This coexistence of exotericism and esotericism in a traditional form is perfectly normal, and we have another example of it in the case of Islam; what is not normal is the negation of esotericism on the part of the representatives of exotericism... But I see that it is necessary to clear up a confusion: the goal of esotericism is good to lead beyond all forms (goal which on the contrary is not and cannot be that of exotericism); but esotericism itself is not beyond forms, for if it were, one obviously could not speak of Christian esotericism, Islamic esotericism, etc.; moreover, the very existence of initiation rites is also sufficient proof of this. As this necessarily modifies the considerations at the end of your letter, I do not insist on it any further, because it will be preferable for you to take up the question again taking it into account.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, July 25, 1950.

Dear Sir, Your

three letters of June 7, 14, and 19 reached me some time ago at a short interval, but not in the order of their dates, because it is even the first that I have last received. It must be said that all these times there has been an extraordinary and completely inexplicable mess in the mail: letters sent by plane are

stayed for up to two or three months on the way, and I ended up receiving at one go about fifty that one might have thought wasted; I haven't yet managed to update all this backlogged correspondence...

On the objection made by your friend about "popularization" or "disclosure", I see that you and I are in agreement; it seems to me that, when he speaks of such a large number of people who today are interested in esotericism, he is confusing, because, in reality, most of these people are only attracted by caricatures or counterfeits of esotericism, which are quite to their taste and within their reach, whereas, if they are presented with the true esotericism, they are quite incapable of understanding anything about it. The proliferation of pseudo-esotericisms in our time is also one of the reasons why it is appropriate to present certain authentic traditional notions, to prevent those who deserve better, however few they may be, from allowing themselves to be deceived and led astray by all these things; and, if these notions are exposed as they are and without distortion or excessive simplification, as it is not in their nature to be "within everyone's reach", we cannot speak in this of "popularization". It is not because something is put before everyone's eyes that it is better understood; the ancient hermetists even sometimes voluntarily used, in their writings, a process which consisted in highlighting precisely what they intended to conceal more particularly... On the other hand, if in the Middle Ages it was not there was no need to give certain indications in writing, it is that those who were looking and who were really qualified could find, in the West itself, initiatory organizations responding to their aspirations, but it is not the same today. As for present-day Christianity, it would certainly be desirable that your friend is not mistaken, but I believe that he is under many illusions; moreover, I do not see any more than you what a "reconstruction" of esotericism could mean if there were a still living Christian initiation, which must, by very definition, have preserved this esotericism intact.

As far as your own question is concerned, it must be clearly understood that the constitution of Christianity in exotericism did not have the effect of making esotericism disappear, which on the contrary was still maintained for many centuries with organizations corresponding, although the outer church could only "officially" ignore it, since these are things that do not fall within its domain, which is exclusively that of exotericism. As for the "glimmers" of intuition of which you speak, apart from any regular transmission, I am far from contesting them, but I do not think that they can ever cease to be fragmentary and dispersed, nor consequently replace the initiation; as long as one remains in exotericism alone, there cannot be more than that; moreover, these are always exceptional cases, of which one cannot make a rule, and among which no one has the right to think that he will be able to find himself, because there is nothing deliberate.

To come back to your friend, about what you quote me about him in your second letter, there isn't really much to add, because he comes back a lot on the same things; I can only maintain that there is no "disclosure", and I wonder what this "avalanche of publications" of which he speaks can be, because on the contrary I only see a tiny number that really have value

traditional. It is also obvious that, by the very course of the cycle, the initiates must always be less and less numerous, and this until the very end of the Kali-Yuga, because it is only then that the "descent" will be completed (it must be understood that the ascent, to reach the origin, is only effected by a sudden "reversal" and not gradually). I cannot understand what he can find that is not clear enough in all this; if he doesn't understand my explanations, I really can't help it... -- What I have just said already partly answers the questions that you yourself have added; moreover, it is possible that, as you say, the need to "anticipate" is in a certain sense less towards the end of the cycle, but we must not forget that there is also another need, the one that some at least keep until the end the integral deposit of the tradition to transmit it to the future cycle. What I don't quite understand is that you think that exotericism is preferable in certain cases to esotericism, because it is not of the same order, and you seem to be considering an esoteric path outside of organizations. Initiations, whereas it can only be a question of a simple theoretical study, the danger of which I do not see. Finally, it is of course understood that all exotericism necessarily has a "social" side (this is not specific to Christianity alone), and we can indeed say that this partly explains its limitations.

I thank you for having communicated to me also in your third letter, the new precisions given by your friend; of course, this does not alter what I have already said, despite the distinction he seeks to make between different types of initiation; the initiatory "qualifications" are moreover something quite different from the profane "qualities" with which he seems to tend to confuse them. I only add that certain external similarities between the language of the mystics and the initiatic terminology should not cause illusion; the same words, like that of "union" for example, are in no way taken in the same sense, and I believe, moreover, that I have pointed this out on various occasions.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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Cairo, November 19, 1950.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I received your letter of November 1; believe that you are fully excused for not having written to me sooner, for I see that you have been very busy in many ways. First of all, I send you all my congratulations and my best wishes on the occasion of the birth of your daughter; of course, I take good note of your change of residence.

For what you tell me about your friend, I am naturally familiar with the hermetic school of Kremmez, and I must say that all that I have seen of it has never inspired me with much confidence; you are no doubt aware that it has split into several rival groups, all of which seem to have been in a great deal of agitation for some time past. On the other hand, I had never heard of Count Alberti until now, who, if I understand correctly, must have also founded another organization of the same kind, in competition or even in opposition to this one; could you give me some

more precise explanations of what it is. In any case, I don't need to tell you that, from the initiatory point of view, it is hardly possible to believe in the regularity of all this...

As for Scaligero, all the same I would not have believed in such incomprehension on his part, and unfortunately, according to what you tell me, it is to be feared that it is irremediable; but you must realize that, if I answered him as I did, it is much less for himself than for his readers (Rocco proposes to publish a translation of my article in his review), and also for all those who, without being as obstinate as he, could make more or less similar errors of interpretation. It was only by reading his next article that I realized his "steinerism", by the way he attacked Evola on this subject; his idea according to which initiatory forms have lost all value for "modern" humanity agrees quite well with Steiner's theories... In 1939, he sent me his book "La Razza di Roma", but the "ETs suspended their publication before I could review it; when I wanted to resume it after the war, I realized that it had already lost all meaning, because of the events that had taken place in the meantime, and that it had become really impossible to talk about them; a book which depends so much on "current events" can certainly not be of very great value!

We agree on the three modes of action of which you speak, on the condition of specifying that the third is only possible, as you envisage it besides in interrogative form, after the total spiritual realization; this is then the case of the "missionaries". This is what I have called "top-down realization"; but, as the articles in which I have dealt with this subject date from 1939, I do not know if you have read them.

The way you envision the events of your life can be true, because everything necessarily has a reason for being and can at least have the value of "signs"; only, the danger is to attach an exaggerated importance to them (I know people who attribute a "cosmic" significance to everything that happens to them), and, without neglecting them entirely, the best thing is perhaps not to be too s stop there...

Believe, please, dear Sir, in my best feelings

RG

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***Letters from René Guénon to Professor Théodore Monod (1)***  
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Cairo, 29 May 1947  
(poste restante, central office)

Sir, Your

letter reached me only a few days ago, my distance will explain this delay to you, because postal communications are still very slow and not very regular.

For the question of pre-Columbian relations with America, I had in mind the affair you are talking about, and I confess that I do not see what difference it makes that it concerns the boreal latitudes rather than the middle latitudes, since, in any case, it is always America that is in question. I learned that an important work on this subject had recently appeared in America: "*America: 1355-1364*" by Hjabuar R. Holand. But there would also be other things, in particular an Irish affair (it would be more precisely about the culde monks). We would also have preserved the memory (but I no longer know in which region) of an establishment formed by men whose costume, as it is described, is none other than that of the Templars: and, singular thing, this establishment would have been destroyed on a date corresponding almost exactly to that of the destruction of the Order of the Temple in Europe... Unfortunately, it is impossible for me now to find the information that I could have on all this; it is wrong to say that the 1st edition of "*La Crise du Monde Moderne*" dates back to 1927, and also that I only ever dealt with these historical "sides" quite incidentally. I will have to ask one of my friends, who once took a special interest in this question, if he can give me some details and, if so, I will not fail to communicate them to you.

With regard to your other question concerning "Tradition", it is correct, as you supposed, that the answer is to be found in my works, which are all based essentially on traditional data, as well as those a few others, notably AK Coomaraswamy. Since you would like to find above all a statement of a general nature, it would no doubt be best if you could read my "General Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines"; unfortunately, like all my pre-war works, it is now out of print, but it is to be reissued fairly soon, probably towards the end of this year. In this regard, and in the same order of ideas, I would also take the liberty of pointing out to you our review "*Traditional Studies*" (published at the Chacornac bookstore, 11, quai St-Michel) thinking that you may not have one not aware.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

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1 — Published in *GRAAL Special No. Winter 1987/88* (Colloque de Bagnoles-de-l'Orne).

Cairo, August 24, 1947

Sir, Here

is the information I have just received concerning what you asked me about pre-Columbian relations with America: "The Celtic monks of Ireland would have gone to evangelize the North-West of Canada, and from there they would perhaps have descended as far as Peru, where we find traces of a white evangelizer who has been wrongly identified with the apostle Saint-Thomas. As for the Templars, it is in Mexico that they would have had possessions. All of this can be found in the works of Eugène Beauvois, whose offprints are in the National Library where they can easily be consulted.

On the other hand, I saw that a book recently appeared entitled "Vers les Terres fortunées, 780-1490" by Mornand (Éditions de la Nouvelle France, 1946) which, according to the report which was given, also relates to the history of Irish monks in America; the date of 780 would be, if I understood correctly, that of the foundation of their first establishments which would thus be prior to the Norman expeditions.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

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Cairo, October 12, 1947

Sir, I

received your dispatch a few days ago, with your letter of September 19, and I, in turn, thank you very much for it. As regards the question which was the occasion of our correspondence, it would naturally be necessary to be able to examine more closely the work of E. Beauvois in order to be able to realize what his arguments are worth; but from what I have been told about it, it does not seem to be comparable to the deplorable fantasies that you rightly denounce. For my part, I am particularly wary of imagination; languages because I have seen too many of all kinds.

I was very interested in the brochures that you were kind enough to send me, first for their very content, and also for a reason which you certainly could not have guessed when you sent me this. Here's what it's all about: I was sent some time ago a copy of two paintings which are in the library of the mosque in Paris and which intrigue everyone, because we don't know what their meaning is. origin. However, one of these paintings bears the signature: "Amadou Hampaté Bâ", which no one understood; I saw right away that it was a Sudanese name, but of course I didn't know any better. This table relates to an esoteric interpretation of the Muslim prayer, in correspondence with certain numbers, some of which are easily explained, but others of which present a rather enigmatic disposition. From what I see, there is no doubt that it is your friend who wrote it, and that he must have composed it according to the teachings of his uncle. The other painting, which is not signed, but which is probably of the same origin, seems to relate to

correspondences of certain elements of Arabic music. I would now like to ask you if it would be possible for you to give me the address of Amadou Hampaté Bâ, so that we can have by himself some explanations about various points of these paintings which interest us more than once. title. I hope this question will not be indiscreet and I send you all my thanks in advance for what you can let me know about this.

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Cairo, December 15, 1947

Dear sir,

Thank you very much for your prompt response, I will not fail to write to Mr. Amadou Hampaté Bâ as soon as I have been able to take the time to review your points in his prayer plan which seem to me to have more particular need. explanations, especially since what you tell me about him further increases my interest in him.

I am also very interested because you are telling me about your work in preparation, in particular on the teaching of Tierno Bokar; Although I was in contact with the "Cahiers du Sud", I did not know that they intended to publish a volume there on the "Black World". As for the history of Kaydara, I think that you must naturally know that this one is none other than El Khidr (Qôran, surat El Kahf).

As for the other painting I told you about, whoever the author is, all that I can distinguish in it is the indication of a correspondence of certain musical elements with the different times of the day. (as in Hindu music), and also something which, through a relationship between these same elements and human temperaments, seems to have a possible connection with the therapeutic effects of music. I know that all that existed indeed in Arabic music, but here it is completely forgotten now; these things; would they have been better preserved in certain more or less remote regions. like Sudan? Perhaps you can tell me something on this subject, if not abuse the kindness with which you kindly offer to give me information on occasion and for which I still want to express to you all my thank.

Believe, I beg you, Sir, in my best and most distinguished sentiments.

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Cairo, February 1 , 1948

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of January 21, which I have just received. About Kaydara, I understand very well that indeed it was not possible for you to give many details in your lecture; I would be very interested in the more complete study that you have in preparation now.

What you tell me about Mr. Mercier's communication confirms what I thought; it seems, according to this, that the knowledge of these correspondences of music must have been preserved in certain regions less affected than others by

Western influence. I take good note of his address, because I may write to him some day on this subject as you suggest, if however I manage to find the time, because I still miss him for many things!

For the same reason also, I mean the lack of time, I have not yet examined M. Hampate Bâ's painting again, and consequently I have not yet written to him. When I do, it is understood that I will not fail to take the precaution you indicate to me; I had believed, from what you told me earlier, that this hostility of the colonial administration towards the Tijaniyah was of the past, but, in any case, it is quite certain that one cannot too be wary of the consequences that some people's incomprehension can have... I remember in this connection a very typical example of a similar mentality: would you believe that in India some 30 or 40 years ago, the English officials tried to ban the reading of the Bhagavad-Gita because it is about fighting?

Believe, I beg you, dear sir, in my best and most distinguished sentiments.

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***René Guénon to an unidentified doctor***

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Letters from (A) to (Z4)  
(AT)

Cairo, August 17, 1932  
(Poste restante, central office)

Sir, I

receive your letter today only and the origin of this one will explain to you the reason for this delay. I live, in fact, in Egypt, and correspondence does not always reach me very quickly.

I am happy with what you are telling me about my "Introduction" and the interest you have taken in it; I hope that it will be the same for my other works, which moreover all relate, without exception, to the same principles. The reason for the silence on these books is indeed what you say; but now, as this tactic is no longer sufficient, recourse is had to insult and slander, which proves that the truth is not always good to say there, in our time less than ever...

I would never have believed that the hatred of the Orient and all that pertains to it could reach such violence among so many people in Europe, who, moreover, seem to have nothing in common between them apart from of this hate!

The question that you address to me is often asked, and I must say that it always embarrasses me, because I do not know of Western works, translations or other, that it is possible to recommend without restriction.

The translation of the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad of which you speak, which was published under the signature of P. Hérold (it is in reality a collective work: Sylvain Lévi, Foucher, etc...) is almost incomprehensible, fault explanations that its authors would have been hard pressed to give. I suppose that apart from that, however, you must know at least the Bhagavad-Gita, of which there are quite a few translations; that of Burnouf, which must have been reissued fairly recently (but I don't know by which house) has the main drawback of being very vague. The most recent, that of Sanart (collection of classics of the Orient), (???) in Sanskrit terms; by comparing the two, we can get away with it more or less... There is no translation of Upanishads in French that deserves to be mentioned; some texts were, however, translated in the past by Pauthier in the two large volumes entitled "

The Sacred Books of the East", but I believe it is now untraceable.

These old translations are often preferable to more recent ones, because, if they also contain multiple errors, at least these are not due to the influence of preconceived ideas.

If you know English, you can see the translation of the Upanishads by Max Müller (sacred books of the East, Oxford University Press, which is neither more nor less than any other, provided you do not take into account either the preface or notes.

Same observation for the translation of the Brahma-Sûtras with the commentaries of Shankarâchârya and Râmânujâ by G. Thibaut in the same series. In any case, I take the liberty of urging you to see translations only after having read my books; there is

many things that you can then rectify on your own.

I also point out to you the translation of the life of Milarepa (a Tibetan work) by J. Bacot (in the classics of the Orient already mentioned); this is excellent, including the preface, which is fortunately very far from the usual conceptions of Orientalists.

I have published nothing on the question of which you speak in connection with Grousset; but, in reality, the Mahâyâna is so transformed that it is no longer even Buddhism, but rather Tantrism; there was therefore a "recovery" in the traditional sense.

Please believe, Sir, in my distinguished sentiments.

RG

(B)

Cairo, December 3, 1932.

Sir, I

apologize for being somewhat late in responding to your letter; my correspondence is always extremely heavy.

Since you took care to number your questions, I think I only have to go over them in the same order to answer them. 1°-- I have

not yet had the opportunity to develop the Apûrva theory; it's one of the many things I always intend to do, but will I ever have the time to do them? 2°-- I think that there would be many

distinctions to be made in what is called "madness", but, in any case, it is always a question of an imbalance and a lack of cohesion between the various constituent elements of individuality; it is not the inner being that is affected, it is its means of manifestation that are altered more or less seriously.

It is not likely that Shakespeare had any knowledge of Hindu doctrines, but he certainly knew (he or those to whom he spoke) the similar or equivalent doctrines which existed in the West in the Middle Ages, although, in a way that was still quite hidden and of which there were still many vestiges in his time. There are many indications of such knowledge in him, other than those you cite; in reality, it is by no means a question of "visions", but of very positive sciences.

3°-- It is understood that the ordinary man cannot be fully conscious in all states, or, if you prefer, transport the center of his consciousness there at will; but, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that it is a question here of a state of the real being and not of physiological or even psychological states. I don't know what physiological deep sleep is, I would understand better if we were talking about the physiological manifestations corresponding to deep sleep; and, if there is then an appearance of unconsciousness, is it not simply because the being has withdrawn to such a depth that communication with the bodily modality is reduced to almost nothing?

4°-- I don't really understand the "lack of concordance" that you think you see in this

concerning posthumous evolution; it seems to me that here you are trying too hard to simplify, by suppressing the intermediate stages which correspond to the multiple modalities of the subtle state.

5°-- For the question concerning procreation, the following should be noted: first, from the point of view of the Principle, the entire world of manifestation is strictly null, and thus the thing is without importance; then, from the point of view of manifestation, the latter, since it is a possibility, has its *raison d'être* and its place in the Totality, and thus its suppression cannot even be envisaged.

On the other hand, the being that is born is not a being that begins to exist (which would not make sense) it is a being that enters a certain state of manifestation through which it must pass as well than by an indefiniteness of others; it may even be that this state happens to be precisely the one that will serve as a point of support, or better still as a "base" to reach Deliverance.

6°-- It seems to me that there is an ambiguity on the terms "conscience", "knowledge", etc...; they must all be transposed analogically to apply to the supreme state, and thus what they designate no longer has any common measure with the limited modalities which, as far as the conditioned states are concerned, are designated by the same words. to express a certain correspondence, which could in no way be regarded as an identity, nor even as a similarity; this question of the application of the analogical meaning is extremely important. 7°-- The siddhis or powers of the Yogi are indeed, as

I said, only secondary consequences of his state and which have no interest by themselves; those who seek such things may be sure never to reach the goal that alone matters. On the other hand, why want the *jīvan-mukta* to have a special aspect and a particular way of life? Being beyond forms, it can take on any formal appearance whatsoever; having reached the goal, he no longer has any rule to follow, because every rule is only a simple means, and "he is his own law". It is said that Ramakrishna had attained the state of *Parama hamsa*, that is to say a high but still conditional spiritual state; he had therefore not realized the supreme Identity which is obtained once and for all and from which the being does not come out, whatever the appearances. It is moreover very difficult to know exactly what is involved in this case of Rāmakrishna, everything that concerns him having been distorted by his disciples, especially by Vivekānanda. As for Romain Roland, it is better not to say anything about it; his sympathy for the Orient is undoubtedly real, but proceeds only from a silly sentimentality and is addressed to an Orient which bears little resemblance to reality; he understands nothing of these things and would do much better not to get involved in talking about them.

I come back to your question: the Supreme Brahma contains all the states, and it is in no way affected by the manifestation of some of these states, the finite cannot affect the Infinite, in relation to which it is null. ; there is therefore no difficulty there.

8°-- The question concerning intellectual intuition does not arise for us, because we are not concerned with "critique of knowledge"; profane philosophy is not qualified to concern itself with what is in question; besides, when I see the sun,

all the reasoning of the philosophers will not succeed in proving to me that I do not see it, and it is the same thing for intellectual intuition (which is not a special operation, but an immediate knowledge by identification of the knower and the known). 9°-- See the answer to the 7th

question: moreover, how could something (even if it were the manifestation) be outside of the absolute totality? One cannot say that the Deliverance is an "impossibility" of manifestation, since on the contrary it totalizes all the possibilities; it only removes the limitations because these are something purely negative.

10°-- The doctrine does not ignore affectivity or anything else of this sort, but it puts them in their relative place; and while these things can in some cases be used as preliminary means (this is a matter of "individual nature") it can never get very far.

11°-- For your last question, which it is not possible

to answer in a few lines (all the more so since it must first be posed clearly by ridding it of all "literature"), I cannot refer you to my last work "The Multiple States of Being", I must also warn you that it is hardly possible to understand it without having first read "The Symbolism of the Cross" to which it follows directly; it is the continuation of the series started by "Man and his future".

I recognize that an anthology of the Sacred Scriptures would not be useless, but I have no taste or aptitude for the work of a translator, and I must frankly say that I have other things to do; I can only hope that someone will meet who can do this job properly.

I called the number of the "information" that you pointed out to me because, naturally, I do not see French newspapers here and have no means of seeing them, not having the least relation with the Europeans. I admit that the article in question did not seem very clear to me, especially in its conclusions; in any case, Japan, whatever its ambitions, is hardly qualified to take the lead of the Asian peoples, because it has never done anything but copy the civilization of others, and its domination would not be much more readily accepted than that of Westerners.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my distinguished sentiments.

RG

.....  
(VS)

Cairo, July 15, 1933.

Sir, It has

been a long time since I received your letter and I apologize for not having been able to reply to it sooner; indeed, even by devoting all my time to it, it becomes materially impossible for me to keep up to date a correspondence which is constantly increasing...

You asked if there weren't some drawbacks to speaking positively about the "unthinkable": I would even say that there are drawbacks to speaking about it in any way whatsoever, any language necessarily being, in this regard, imperfect and limiting. Also, should we take everything that can be said in this respect only as "ways of speaking

only intended to suggest the inexpressible; from the absolute point of view, silence alone would do.

To see what is really involved in the "inversion" that you note in the Chhândogya Upanishad, it would be necessary to be able to refer to the text itself, which I do not have here at my disposal. On the other hand, for what seems to lend itself to a "reincarnationist" interpretation, this is certainly attributable to the translators, whose incomprehension materializes the meaning of certain expressions, in reality all symbolic.

It is only from the point of view of manifestation that one can speak of the multiple states of a being, since, outside of manifestation, being is beyond this multiplicity. I don't quite understand this objection, because I don't see how "conscience" can intervene in this (and even then we would have to agree on the precise meaning to be given here to the word "conscience"). It is not a question of appearances but of reality since such and such states are manifestations of the same being, what does it matter whether this being, as situated in these states, is aware of it or not? This, of course, changes nothing of what is.

You say that you have not found an answer to the "why" of the painful nature of the manifestation; there is a very simple reason for this: it is that, metaphysically, the question does not arise. Pain, pleasure, etc., are only simple modifications corresponding to possibilities like all the others, and their case does not deserve to be considered in a special way. It would perhaps be more interesting to ask the "why" of ignorance, because this is of a more universal scope; but this "why" at bottom is nothing other than limitation; and the word "deliverance" means precisely freedom from all limitation (without there being any need to speak here of something "undesirable", because it refers both to states where desire has nothing to do ).

For your question relative to the musical symbolism, one could object the share of sentimentality which comes almost inevitably to mingle with what the music expresses or suggests; but I must say, however, that this objection is valid only against modern Western music, in which there is certainly something "distorted". Without pretending to know anything about it, I must say that it is almost impossible for me to find a true rhythm in it, whereas this one feels immediately in oriental music.

The real music, the one that can validly play the role you envision, is really purely mathematical; it is therefore not so far from geometric symbolism, and they are only two forms of expression resting on the same basis.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that everything relating to authentic symbolism is "exact science", in the most rigorous sense of this expression, and does not leave the slightest room for "fantasy" or "dreaming". ; and it could not be otherwise since symbolism is in no way the product of human invention.

For questions relating to "realization", it is quite obvious that the jîvan mukta is no longer an individual, although he keeps the appearances of it, since he is beyond the limitations that define the individual as such. ; but his condition is all the

opposite of an "ecstasy", because this word, etymologically, expresses the idea of "going out of oneself", and then there is nothing more outside of "self"; subject to this reservation, what you say of the passage of Tchang-Tseu is exact. However, I do not see how the conclusion that you draw from it regarding an "absence of relationship" between the *jīvan-mukta* and its formal envelope is justified; he is no longer affected by it, but he can use it, according to the Hindu comparison, "as the carpenter uses his tools"; and it should not be forgotten that everything is contained in the "self".

Whether *jīvan-mukta* really exist is not a question to be discussed, it is a question of fact; when you see the sun, the finest reasoning of philosophers can do nothing against this fact; here it is exactly the same. More generally, there is nothing to discuss about the possibility of any state; for those who have not reached it, it is perfectly useless, and for those who have reached it, it is obvious that the question no longer arises.

But what surprises me is that you speak of works dealing with historical cases of *jīvan-mukti*; how could this exist, since it is something that necessarily escapes any "external" investigation?

The author of such a work, not being himself a *jīvan-mukta*, could always be mistaken, so that it would be useless; and, going deeper into things, I must add that the true *jīvan-mukta* is always unknown as to his "powers", all that can be said is that, having realized the "totality", he has thereby, and "in addition" everything that belongs to all states; this consideration alone makes it superfluous to enter into any details in this respect; and, in particular, with regard to the "siddhis", I think that, for many reasons, it is better not to dwell on them (especially because of the "phenomenal" side which diverts so many people from the essential ).

The *jīvan-mukta* being essentially "beyond name and form", it is quite clear that it can assume any form, without having to resort to any "magical" means; let us not forget that magic belongs entirely to the domain of illusion and does not exceed the possibilities (and even the lower possibilities) of the individual. In truth, it is not the "center which, in the case you are considering, must be transported here or there (you are perfectly right to say that it cannot be localized), but conversely, such and such a thing which is brought to coincide with the center (although this is again, of course, only a way of speaking, but perhaps the least inaccurate).

The "Metaphysical Way", the "Rational Way" and the "Secret Teachings of Gnosis" have never had a proper publisher and have long been completely untraceable; unless you come across them in some second-hand catalog, but even that doesn't happen very often.

If you want to study Sanskrit, I cannot strongly urge you to learn the characters, which does not require very great effort; there can be no transcription which is not "distorting", and especially the one invented by the Orientalists is, for me at least, completely unreadable (and their special signs must be about as difficult to learn as the real characters).

As for the grammar and the dictionary of which you speak, I cannot help you. say, because I don't know them at all.

Receive, I beg you, Sir, the expression of my distinguished sentiments.

RG

(D)

Cairo, December 19, 1933.

Sir, Here

I am again, very late to answer you; the reason is that I have been quite seriously fatigued lately, and, this fatigue having affected my sight especially, I found myself completely unable to write for a whole month; the result has been such an accumulation of correspondence and all sorts of other things that I no longer know how to bring it all up to date...

1°-- You speak of the "(illusory) beings of the Universe", beings are not illusory; what is illusory (which moreover does not mean unreal) are only contingent states. On the other hand, as regards the continuity of the states of a being, it would be inconceivable that this continuity did not exist; on this, I can only refer you to the geometric representations exposed in the "Symbolism of the Cross."

But what does it matter that these states are unaware of each other (you can also be unaware, for having forgotten it, of what happened at such and such a moment of your existence and of the very state in which you currently are); what matters is the being to which these states belong and which does not ignore any of them.

2°-- The question of the passage to unity and multiplicity is the very question of possibilities; I have dealt with it as completely as possible in the first chapters of the "Multiple States of Being". Total Possibility alone is unlimited, a plurality of infinities being contradiction; the possibilities can therefore only be limited. 3°-- Despite your

explanation about the use you made of the word "ecstasy", I continue to think that it is inappropriate anyway: the jīvan-mukta did not come out of the self, since, in his case, there is no more me; obviously one cannot get out of what does not exist... Perhaps this is precisely why one cannot speak here of "absence", nor of a special "phenomenal" appearance. All of this can have a *raison d'être* only in cases where the being has reached states which are still conditioned (states which may even be only simple modalities of the human state, as is the case with mystics, for example). It is only when we consider things from the point of view of a state such as ours that the unconditioned state seems to be the most remote; in reality, it is exactly the opposite, by the very fact that it contains everything (this is why it is possible to reach it from any state). The difficulties that you envisage arise simply, at bottom, from the fact that one speaks of it as a state; it is hardly possible to do otherwise, no doubt, but it must be clearly understood that it is not situated in a series of states; the whole is not one of the parts.

I must also point out to you that, for the supreme realization, one cannot speak of "purely internal evidence", because there is neither internal nor external, all distinction being exceeded; I would add that, as long as we haven't come to that yet,

the internal, in any case, is always worth more than the external; and, as for the skepticism of the "westerners", I think you will agree that it does not matter!

I can't understand what you say about a "split personality"; this is something that cannot exist for any being, in any state whatsoever; all the more so for the one who is beyond all duality. There is surely an ambiguity there, because you speak of a personality "subjected to ignorance"; but the personality is never subject to ignorance, which concerns only the individuality.

A "split personality" is an inconceivable thing, since personality is the sole principle of all states. On the other hand, why speak of the "impossibility for the self to subsist as it is" when there is no self?

But is it necessary for the author to believe in the real existence of a character to play the role? Finally, no possibility, even "taken particularly" can be forbidden to him in whom there is totalization of being; and, if we speak in this connection of "caprice" or "arbitrary", it is only because the point of view of the totality escapes us (the very expression of "point of view" becomes moreover inaccurate here, of course). 4°--

As for your question about the "powers", when you say: "without possibility of phenomena contrary to the natural order of the Universe", if you speak of the total order, it is obvious, since everything necessarily enters into it; only, I don't know why it would be called "natural"...

But it can be phenomena that are completely outside the usual order of a certain state, so that they imply the intervention of something else (which can be very different depending on the case, even if the phenomena as such, that is to say the appearances, are similar: the case of the saint and the sorcerer, for example. relative; for the being who has reached a certain state, even still far from Deliverance, the exercise of such "powers" is totally indifferent; and, if he happens to exercise them accidentally, it is for reasons of another order; that is all that can be said in a general way. As for jīvan-mukta, I do not think that his "powers" are distinguished from the attributes of Brahma (as "non-supreme", because the "supreme has no attributes, it is "nirguna") in a way other than nominal; we also speak of it as we speak of the jīvan-mukta itself and it's exactly the same thing.

Finally, I am surprised that you can say that, the totalization being achieved, there is no longer any place for such and such a thing, whatever it may be; this is contradictory: if there is truly totalization, there is room for everything.

I apologize for these rather summary answers, and where I am not sure of not having forgotten some point; I have little time, but I didn't want to delay any longer.

Thank you for the article attached to your letter; there is there precisely with regard to the use of the word "ecstasy", a rather good example of the confusions so common in our time: "naturist ecstasy", what can that mean? It's like the word "religion" that we apply today to anything... As for Arniel, from what I know of him, it's only simply states

"psychological"; it does not even go as far as mysticism. But the most beautiful thing in this article is the identification of nirvana with nothingness (because it is "suppression of life", as if "life" were everything...): this is what Westerners understand ! Unfortunately, things like this can be found almost everywhere; and the ability so many people have to talk about what they don't know is something incredible; it is a particularly striking sign of the disorder of the present time...

Always believe, I beg you, sir, in my distinguished sentiments.

RG

(E)

Cairo, September 4, 1934.

Sir

Months have elapsed since I received your letter, and during all this time I have found myself prevented from replying to it by a series of circumstances beyond my control; please excuse me. Believe well, moreover, that you are far from being the only one in this case; there has been such a backlog of correspondence that I find it hard to recognize myself in it!

I will try to answer the questions contained in your letter in the order indicated. 1°.

-- In Non-Being,

one cannot really envisage either multiplicity or even unity; this is why we speak only of "non-duality". But, on the other hand, it is quite evident that everything is there in principle, even the distinction of beings; it should only be noted that distinction, here, does not mean separation, the latter being only the fact of the limiting conditions inherent in contingent states.

2°. -- It is of course understood that the Non-Being is not affected by the Being, nor a fortiori by the manifestation of which this one is the principle. But the absence of all manifestation cannot even be assumed, since it would amount to suppressing the possibilities of manifestation, that is to say, to putting them outside of universal Possibility, and therefore to limiting the latter. Analogously, one cannot exclude a single point in space, although the extent of the point is zero.

Error is only the consequence of ignorance, and therefore it is necessarily negative like this; it can never be positive in reality, because nothing can oppose the truth, the latter being infinite and identical to Brahma (Satyam Jnânam Anantam Brahma). More generally, all the attributes of manifested beings which result only from their limitations (due to the special conditions which define their contingent states) are really negative, even if they take on the appearance of positive qualities for us. Things being thus rectified, I do not see that there is the slightest difficulty there, but I believe that, in speaking of "untrue", you have confused partial and contingent truths, which an error can oppose in effect, with the total Truth which alone is to be considered here.

3°. --a) You ask how we know that there are in fact men possessing the state of jîvan-mukta (and I would even say that there still are); one could answer that one knows it from the Tradition, but this, naturally, would require other developments... However, one can also say that, if it did not exist, the

the conscious bond of terrestrial humanity with the Principle would be broken, and that then this very humanity would cease to exist.

b) The states of being being in indefinite multitude, any classification which is given of them can only necessarily be schematic; what it indicates are always "sets", so to speak, or even principal stages if one places oneself from the point of view of "realization". c) There are

indeed states where the being can present the appearance of one who is immersed in deep sleep; but the term 'ecstasy', which relates to 'mystical states', is not appropriate here, for it means 'coming out of oneself', and, if it is really a question of metaphysical realization in any degree, the being is on the contrary "concentrated in itself".

d) The states which have been really acquired by a being are acquired once and for all, and not only momentarily nor even for the duration of earthly life (which can in no way affect the superior states).

4. -- The reasons why beings who have reached certain states can "accidentally" exercise more or less extraordinary "powers" comes under what is sometimes called the "hidden government of the world"; it would therefore be very difficult to explain this with any precision.

5. - Animals being, like ourselves, beings in a certain state of manifestation, it is natural that they have, like us, their "posthumous evolution"; but their "way" is other than that of the beings who pass through the corporeal state as human individuals; it would therefore be without any interest for us to seek to know it in detail.

6. -- Space and time are only special conditions of the corporeal state; but what necessary relation can there be between them and causality? This association seems completely unintelligible to me... The necessity of causality, moreover, imposing itself on human reason (despite all the artificial discussions of philosophers), cannot be established by it, but comes under what is superior to it, that is to say intellectual intuition; and what more could one ask for, since intellectual intuition is immediate and infallible knowledge?

7. -- No, certainly, I have nothing of a "converted", from any point of view; and I do not even conceive that these things could have had a "beginning" for me; this is also why my "example", if I may say so, could not be of any use for anything...

The "split" which took place between East and West can only be explained as a consequence of "cyclical laws"; that is to say that this question would lead us very far. I have already alluded to it in the "Crisis of the Modern World"; perhaps I will come back to it more explicitly in another work which will in some way be the sequel, and which I propose to write as soon as I can find the time.

While repeating to you my apologies for being late, I beg you, Sir, to believe in my distinguished sentiments.

RG

(F)

Cairo, November 19, 1934.

Sir, I

have received your two letters, the first of which crossed mine. -- Thank you for the issue of "Art et Médecine", which also reached me, and for the clippings attached to your last letter; I read it all with interest.

What you say about Vêdânta is correct, but I believe that unfortunately most Westerners nowadays have become completely incapable of thinking... -- One cannot speak of "acquiring buddhi", since 'it is in all beings; it is only a question of becoming aware of what is, but it is understood that all human individuals are not "qualified" for this. 1°. It is not my role to indicate the "practical" means of realization, it would be

quite useless, not only because of Western incomprehension, but because, without regular initiatory transmission, these means are ineffective; what can be learned from books is therefore absolutely useless.

2°. I had already been told that Grouont, in his new work, had omitted to quote me, and I was not very surprised; he must have received comments on this subject from the Maritain group, which will have caused this deletion... It is understood that his interpretations are tendentious and that we must be careful not to accept them as they stand and without examination. What is true with Râmânûja is that there is a predominance of the "bhakti" path in him; but one cannot in any case say that this way leads to the same goal as that of "jnâna" or of knowledge: Îshwara is not the supreme Brahma, but only the Non-Supreme.

3°. If man were no longer susceptible to supreme identity, he would no longer be man; it is not a certain bodily form that makes him be such; there could therefore no longer be any question of humanity. Material existence, moreover, is not something that can be conceived as having its own separate reality; the manifestation, if it were not related to the Principle, would not exist in any way.

4°. Humanity occupies the center of a certain state of manifestation; but this is only any state among the others, which are indefinitely multitude, as much on the side of the lower states as on that of the higher states (lower and higher in relation to the one that we are thus considering more especially because is ours). 5°.

Radam was certainly "learned" enough to have thought of the "Abyss" of the Gnostics when writing the sentence you quote; but the fact of having borrowed this term from them does not prove that there was a real understanding on his part, of which he seems to have

been quite incapable. 6°. a) If I do not speak of the doctrine of the ancient Egyptians, it is because I do not claim to know it, and I even think that no one today can know what it was in reality. The tradition that is alive now in Egypt is the Islamic tradition and no other; the ancient Egyptian tradition is a dead thing for many centuries, and no one here cares about it (the Egyptologists are all Westerners). Notice that the case is much the same for Druidism in France; still the current French are they partly of descent

Celtic, while we are totally unaware of what became of the descendants of the ancient Egyptians. b) I

have heard that Hegel would have made some borrowings from Hindu doctrines, but no doubt in the manner of Schlyel, Schopenhauer and others, that is to say by denaturing them to bring them back to his own way of seeing. Of all the German philosophers, only Leibnitz had any real knowledge, and even that did not go very far; moreover, basically, all that is "philosophy" is only a kind of game to which it would be very wrong to attach any real importance; it may happen that what a philosopher says is true or false, but, in any case, it is never just a construction in the air...

c) I don't know anything about W. Oken except his name; in any case, what is quite certain is that the theory of metaphysical Zero has no "creator", since it is traditional, and it is above all in Taoism that it is developed with the most of sharpness. 7°. The indifference

of Hindus towards Westerners is simply explained by the absence of any concern for "propaganda"; as for me, for the same reason I confine myself to exposing certain things without the intention of convincing anyone, and only for those who can understand them... if there are any; in any case, once this is done (no matter by whom), there is no need for anyone else to do it again. -- But why call myself "European"? I assure you that I have never felt such in any respect!

8° Others than you had already made the same remark to me about the "Symbolism of the Cross"; obviously, it is always possible to add some figures; however, it didn't seem necessary to me, because I thought that everyone could easily trace them if they felt the need to; finally, it will be to see in case of reissue...

If, despite what you say, you still have to ask me for explanations, do not be afraid to do so; I would only ask you to please always excuse the delay in my replies. As for the offer you made to me very kindly, I thank you for it, but it is not in my habit to receive anything in exchange for some information. I will only ask you, when you come across something that you think might be of interest to me, to please remember to send it to me as you did this time.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

(G)

Cairo, February 12, 1935.

Sir, I

received your letter and its contents a few days ago, as well as the package containing the "Ethereal World"; thank you for all. Apart from the translation of the "Tao Te-King" of Fr. Wieger, I know of only two others from which we can draw something: one is that which is incorporated in the "Rational Way" of Matgioi; the other is that of Alexander Ular; but, unfortunately, I believe that these two works too are now quite impossible to find.

For the expression "to acquire the buddhi", there is a difference with what you quote me: one cannot say of a faculty (which moreover is in all being) what one can say of a state .

1. What you say regarding the case of the isolated, and the application you make to it of the passage from the Brahma-sūtras, is perfectly accurate; moreover, it is understood that these can only be rare exceptions.

2. Since the true Rosicrucians withdrew from the West, it seems that there no longer exists any really living initiatic center there. There are still vestiges, I mean something that represents many initiatic organizations, but in very bad condition; Masonry and Fellowship. Apart from that, there is only charlatanism or fantasy, in a word "pseudo-initiation",... and sometimes even something worse, which comes under "counter-initiation". -- I must however add that it is possible that there are still here and there some Kabbalists; but they do not make themselves known and must be very difficult to accept pupils, even among the Jews; as for non-Jews, it is practically inaccessible to them.

3. What you say about the limitations of Rāmānuja is quite correct: his doctrine is valid for a certain relative point of view, but not beyond. One could say that it is "negatively" heterodox when it dwells in denying what goes beyond its own point of view; it is also the same for whoever, being competent for a certain domain only, claims to judge what is beyond; and you could apply it to the doctors of exoteric religions, whatever they may be, who claim to formulate any appreciation whatsoever on what pertains to esotericism.

I know the "Comparative Philosophy" of Masson-Oursel, and also the author; sympathy with Eastern doctrines, or at least with what he believes them to be, there is no doubt; but understanding? I can assure you that it is not; the poor boy who has the misfortune to be both an associate professor of philosophy and a student of Orientalists, is quite incapable of ever leaving his university framework! He wrote about my books in the "Mercure de France" and I don't know where yet, reviews which are among the most remarkable for their complete incomprehension... -- Sympathy is not enough and can be misleading; we must not forget that, without even speaking of the theosophists among whom the thing is pushed to the point of caricature, there are people who have sympathized with a fanciful Orient that they dreamed of and who make the greatest wrong to the true East; Keyserling and Romain Rolland are fairly typical examples.

I cannot tell you about Wachsmuth's book this time, because I haven't had time to see it yet.

Oken's passage is indeed quite curious, but very confusing; there is certainly what you say: confusion between the mathematical zero and the metaphysical zero; basically, he can't get out of the realm of quantity, and it's obvious that he doesn't know how to make the necessary transpositions.

As for Paul Valéry, I always wonder what he means, and if there isn't in him a sort of pseudo-intellectual "game" rather than serious thought; it is to be feared that the influence of which you speak, if it exists, is purely verbal. Formerly, the unfortunate Alfred Jarry had seized upon a few formulas of the Upanishads which he repeated to and fro in the midst of his ramblings; had

he never understood a single word? This one had gone mad, which is certainly not the case with Valéry; but I quote it to you to show that one should not allow oneself to be deceived by external borrowings which do not necessarily imply any assimilation whatsoever.

From another point of view, I am also very suspicious of what can be found among philosophers; one must always be afraid of lending too much to them, because deep down they are terribly limited. Undoubtedly, there may well be some gleams in them, especially without their knowing it; but they quickly recover and drown this in the mass of their "rational" theories!

One of the articles in *Le Temps* concerns Granet's book; you will have seen, moreover, the one dedicated to her in January's "*Voile d'Isis*". I have had the book itself in front of me for several months already; but I haven't been able to find the time to read it yet!

Always believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

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(H)

Cairo, March 22, 1935.

Sir, Thank

you for your new consignment, which reached me the day before yesterday.

Monterlant's article is really curious, but... isn't there, above all, a certain tendency for him to want to make a paradox? I have heard very different opinions expressed on his account, and some go so far as to consider him as a sort of "insider" (?); for my part, I quite simply believe that it sometimes has certain "glimmers", as indeed happens to many writers and poets, without this ever being able to go very far... -- I I also read Thérive's article which comes next, and whose title makes you expect something else; there would indeed be a lot to say about the "myths of fire", but, like everything he writes, it remains very "literary" and superficial...

Since I wrote to you, I have read the book on the "Ethereal World"; that is very confused, and there is above all a mixture of the fanciful views of Steiner (borrowed moreover in large part from the theosophists, with simple changes in terminology) with the theories of modern science, of which all these people always seem strongly impressed. With all this, it is not possible to know very exactly what it is and where it is. In fact, according to traditional doctrines, the ether does not belong to the subtle domain at all; it is only the first of all the elements of the corporeal world, the one from which the others (and consequently the bodies which are formed from them) derive directly or indirectly. Moreover, it is not possible to speak of a plurality of ether, since it is a question of what, in the corporeal world, represents a state of indifferentiation, where the qualities which will be manifested in the other elements are in a state of neutrality, the opposites balancing each other perfectly. This is also why the ether, the "quintessence" of the hermetists, is symbolized by the center of the cross, the ends of the four branches of which correspond to the other four elements. -- As for the conceptions concerning the first human races, it is extravagance

all pure; it is moreover entirely drawn from the "Secret Doctrine" of HPB -- What is rather curious, it is the tendency which the disciples of Steiner have to try to apply their ideas especially to rather varied things: teaching, medicine, chemistry,... up to agriculture! One wonders what intentions are behind all this...

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

(I)

Cairo, May 5, 1935.

Sir,

Received your letter about ten days ago, but I couldn't find the time to answer it sooner.

For your remark about the "Ethereal World", it was Steiner himself who placed his "anthroposophical" organization under the patronage of Goethe, since he gave the name "Goetheanum" to his institute at Dornach; Basically, I believe that the only reason that can be found for this is that Goethe was always considered, rightly or wrongly, to have belonged to some more or less "Rosicrucian" group. "I had often heard high praises of the second Faust; but I must say that when I had the opportunity to read it (in translation, it is true, since I don't know German), I was very disappointed; I don't know if it's because there's a form of expression there that I'm not used to, but I only see a very vague and nebulous symbolism in it, which I would gladly compare to that of "Peer Gynt" by Ibsen. I do not believe that one can find there a Gnostic derivation; to tell the truth, the legend of Faust does indeed have an initiatory origin, but the question would be to know to what extent Goethe preserved its primitive

character... 1°. It is very difficult to speak of "counter-initiation" more clearly than I have done in some of my articles; it responds to a properly "satanic" design, that is to say that it tends to develop the being in a direction that runs counter to spirituality; as for its general action in the world, it claims to go against the realization of the divine plan, which is moreover necessarily illusory, because nothing can really oppose it, and even everything contributes willy-nilly thank you.

2°. Your arithmetic representation for the three gunas seems to me very acceptable; but it should be noted that there are other cases where the "positive" and the "negative" are taken to represent, not the "superior" and the "inferior" as here, but only two correlative and complementary terms ; great care must therefore be taken to avoid any confusion between these different

applications. 3°. The symbol in question is the figure of Ganesha, the Hindu symbol of

Knowledge. 4°. For the passage of "Man and his becoming" that you point out, there is not really a contradiction: the "living soul" is a thing, and the "true consciousness of being" is one. another which is not indissolubly linked to it; this consciousness can very well be transferred to a deeper degree, as already happens, during life, in deep sleep, which is also truly an informal, therefore supra-individual state; but it is quite obvious that the "living soul"

individual is not destroyed for this.

5°. Participation in doctrine can obviously include many degrees, and it can only be indirect and virtual; the initiation itself can remain virtual as to its effects; all the more so when it is a question of the "exoteric" participation of the profane. However, when there is a real attachment to tradition, even indirectly, it is not something merely theoretical; it is therefore of another order than a rational adhesion to a "belief"; and we must take care that these are not things that can be interpreted in "psychological" terms. As to whether this link is really broken in the case of "conversions" of which you speak, the question is not so simple: it may be so sometimes, but not necessarily always; to realize this, it would be necessary to be able to ascertain what will happen at the death of the being considered, and, if one can say, in which direction he will then go. 6°. I am not surprised that the work you

are talking about disappointed you as to what you expected to find there; moreover, to what extent do the "neo-Thomists" understand Saint Thomas? In any case, it is certain that even quotations from Saint Thomas can always be interesting and useful; the passage you quote is indeed remarkable, and one could no doubt find others of the same kind. Because of that, I gladly accept your offer to send me the book, when you no longer need it yourself. -- I don't know if one can establish a direct relationship with the Tao wherever it is a question of "way"; it is none the less true that there is here at least the use of the same symbolism. On the other hand, it is quite certain that it was through the intermediary of the Arabs that Aristotle was known in Europe in the Middle Ages; the Latin translations were then made on the Arabic translations, and not directly on the Greek text. -- Albert the Great and Saint Thomas were attached to a hermetic organization; but it is possible that the denomination of "Rose-Croix" was not yet in use at that time; I do not believe that it could have appeared in fact before the 14th century. 7°. For the "fulgurations" of Leibnitz, your

comparison with Râmânúja is perhaps not without foundation, but there is still another one more striking with the Tibetan symbolism of the "Vajra"; I mentioned it in a "Veil of Isis" article on "Lightning Stones", which I can't find right now. -- As for the relation of "confused perceptions" and "distinct perceptions" in the monad, it is derived from the Aristotelian theory of potency and act, but with rather curious complications. -- What is absurd is, as you say, the "choice" of God among the possible worlds; it must be said, moreover, that the Leibnitzian idea of the "Brave New World" is drawn from mathematical considerations that are exact in themselves, but badly applied. 8°. Surely, current events prove me only too well; I would have preferred that they did not do it

so completely, nor especially in such a fast way!

I have already heard of the new book on "Buddhist meditation"; from what I have been told, it seems to be a fairly "Westernized" presentation. I wondered if it would be made a service for the "Veil of Isis; nothing having yet come, it is unlikely now. Again, I allow myself

therefore to accept your offer, but always, of course, on the condition that you do not want to keep the volume yourself; thanks in advance.

Always believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

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(J)

Cairo, May 31, 1935.

Sir, The

books arrived a few days after your letter, as is often the case with printed matter; thank you for this sending as well as for the cuts.

It is understood that I will return the "Intellectual Intuition" to you; I'll let you know when I read that. For the moment, I could only take a look at the other two volumes. This "adaptation of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ is, indeed, another fine example of Western misunderstanding; and I really wonder how one can afford to write and publish something on a subject that one ignores so completely ; the way of proceeding of the author reminds me of the translations of Salet... -- As for the "Buddhist Meditation", it is a kind of rather elementary summary, where one feels the constant concern to choose what can be appropriate to Westerners; this surely cannot lead very far, but at least it is harmless enough, and it is always better than the phantasmagoria of the Theosophists!

I only know of L. Snali's book through a very glowing review that I saw in an Italian newspaper, but which did not tell me much about the substance; if you will let me know, I will send it back to you at the same time as the other volume.

The answer that you received from L. Lavelle is indeed, in short, the one that one could expect from an "academic" such as him; one cannot even hope to arouse any interest whatsoever in these people, nor to get them out of their pseudo-problems... I always wonder, on the other hand, to what extent philosophers such as this Jaspers (whom I was completely unaware) themselves understand what they are saying, and whether the oriental influence, when it exists, goes further than a simple borrowing of formulas which for them remain purely verbal.

I hope that the "Veil of Isis" will interest you, I regret not having thought to tell you about it earlier... 1°. The

Buddhists have often been reproached for the contradiction that you point out, and, in fact, it is not clear what the being that passes from one state to another can be for them; no doubt this simply proves the impossibility of logically pushing the theory of "impermanence" to its conclusion. 2°. I do not see why

the acquisition of knowledge should not continue in the "prolonged life", especially if it has already been prepared in some way during earthly existence; the being is never "fixed" until the final goal is reached. 3°. One can undoubtedly speak of heredity for

certain psychic elements, but there are also resemblances which are explained rather by "affinity". The individual is in

somehow the result of the encounter of a certain being with a certain environment, and there must necessarily be a "suitability" of this environment with this being. -- Maeterlinck's article expresses well, as you say, the Western conception, which, here as elsewhere, only takes into account the "horizontal direction" represented here by the middle, and totally ignores the "vertical direction", c that is to say what properly belongs to real being. -- I would add that, in an era like ours, the affinities are certainly less clear and the cases of exception more numerous than in a more regular period.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

(K)

Cairo, July 2, 1935.

Sir, I

received your letter last week, together with an issue of "Art et Médecine"; the reproductions it contains are interesting, but it is a pity that the text sticks to such "profane" and external points of view. -- The books arrived a few days later; thanks at all. -- I didn't know that Suali's had been translated into French. I have Mukerji's, quite "mixed" indeed; well, I'll send it all back to you at the same time.

Since I wrote to you, I have read R. Jolivet's pamphlet, and I must confess that, apart from the quotations from Saint Thomas, I have not found much of interest in it; all these subtleties "on the side" and all these stories of "abstract" and "concrete" do not correspond to anything real for me; I also wonder to what extent Saint Thomas himself cannot be held responsible for the fantastic role attributed to "abstraction" by modern scholastics... Anyway, I noticed one thing which seems to me very important: it is that, almost everywhere where one translates by "spirit", the Latin text actually bears the word "mens", which, obviously, is not at all the same thing. Then the passages which seem to deny intellectual intuition are self-explanatory, since it is with regard to "lying" that they deny it: this amounts to saying that "Buddhi" is not included in "manas", which is correct; and it is also true, moreover, that "Buddhi" is not a human (individual) faculty. being human is also something else entirely.

M. Fleury, who is both a spiritualist and a pantheist, formerly overwhelmed me with letters which were only full of philosophical "discussions" of which his article can give you an idea; seeing that it was impossible to make him understand anything, I ended up stopping answering him. Again, this article in the "Mercure" is rather less bad than another which he published a few years ago in a review entitled "l'Esprit français", which, I believe, has since ceased publication.

The article on "oration" is not by me, but by F. Schuon; that does not prevent me, moreover, from completely approving its content.

I have just read Granet's "Chinese Thought", not having had the time so far; there is some interesting documentation in there, especially with regard to

relates to numbers; but it is quite obvious that deep down he does not understand, and his "sociological" interpretations reverse things by giving as their origin what is only a simple application.

The article by this Doctor Naacune, whom I don't know at all, is indeed quite interesting; only, I wonder what this story is about a lost work of Saint Augustine, which would have been entitled "Beauty and Convention"; This title seems very "anachronistic" to me...

I did not know the passages from Nietzsche and Shakespeare that you quoted to me, and which are indeed quite curious, the latter especially. -- as for Malbranche, I don't think he had anything of an esotericist, because then he would not have been influenced by Descartes as he was; what can sometimes give the illusion of it in him is quite simply what he borrowed from Platonism (or neo Platonism), which moreover he must have known especially through Saint Augustine.

I will now move on to your various questions.

1°. It must be understood that this "indefinite prolongation of individual life" is not something that man obtains by himself, but a consequence of his participation in a Tradition; and it is clear that the reason for this is not so much to maintain it in its individuality, which in itself would have no interest, but to allow it to obtain, in this extension and in a way deferred", which he had not been able to achieve during his earthly life. 2°. The passage to a higher state (as a state) does not

necessarily imply that the being must be "born" there in a "central" condition as is that of man in our state; in this there are also animals, vegetables, etc., and in the other states there is naturally something which corresponds to all this; a being can therefore, while being in a higher state, find himself there under less advantageous conditions. -- As for the "fall of the angels", we must see there above all a symbolism, which is far from being perfectly clear. In Eastern doctrines, there is never any question of "fall" strictly speaking, but only of a distancing from the Principle in the process of manifestation (this for the development of each state considered in itself and separately).

3°. "Birth" and "death" appear as exceptional modifications only insofar as we place ourselves in the very cycle of which they mark the beginning and the end; otherwise there is no difference between them and the other modifications; the explanation you are considering on this subject is therefore quite correct, and that is exactly what I wanted to say.

4°. Similarly, on the subject of the species, the answer to the objection of which you speak is indeed that the species has reality only in the "horizontal" sense exclusively. I have long intended to treat the question of the species and its conditions in a more developed way; I don't know if I will ever have the opportunity to carry out this project...

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my most distinguished sentiments.

RG

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(I)

Cairo, August 26, 1935.

Sir,

I received, ten days ago already, your letter of August 2, then your package for which thank you.

I only knew Luther's "Table Talk" by reputation, having never had the opportunity to read them (I don't know German), but what you tell me about it doesn't surprise me; anyway I would not be sorry to see this more closely...

I read L. Sual's book; as you told me, it is well presented; one criticism that could be made of it is that it quite often uses specifically Christian expressions which can give rise to false assimilations.

If you are not in too much of a hurry to get your books, I will wait a little longer before sending them back to you, so that I can attach Oldenberg's "Buddha" to them when I have seen it, since you are good enough to also communicate it. -- I will also enclose your copy of the "Buddhist Meditation", because I have received another which was sent, quite late for the rest, as a service to the "Veil of Isis".

I thank you for the offer you made me so kindly to send me the "Asian Mythology", which I do not know at all. You can very well send me a postal parcel; this has already happened several times, and they have always come to me very well; I find in this case a notice at the post office.

I had already been told about this book on the "cult of Civa"; the quote is enough indicate the spirit; it is truly unheard of, and moreover very English...

The story of the mandrake is a really curious thing; I once saw one which very clearly represented a man, a woman and a child. Those who claim that the roots which present such forms have been worked have certainly never seen any, for, by their very texture, this is a thing quite impossible.

Regarding the passage from Shakespeare, the expression "maturity" is quite accurate indeed; it is moreover regularly employed in India in an identical sense; as for the verses of Leconte de Lisle, I did not know them, or at least I had no recollection of them; I admit that I am a little surprised, because it never seemed to me that he was able to reach a very deep understanding; perhaps it is, as very often happens, something that he has appropriated without grasping much more than the words; In any case, it cannot be the effect of a simple coincidence...

F. Schuon is indeed the real name of the author of the article on "oraison"; he is of Alsatian origin, but currently lives in Switzerland; he has even formed, at Basle and Lausanne, two groups of young people who study metaphysical doctrines very seriously; I believe that this is something that would be more difficult to achieve in France!

Rivaud seems to me, from what I know of him, less narrowly "limited" than many other academics; but he too is taken by the prejudice of referring everything to the Greeks; and, even among these, there are surely many things which escape him; his confusion about numbers shows it. It is true that we often see, in our time, people who go much further in this direction, up to

confuse the number with the cipher!

About the numbers, I do not see that there is, in the Chinese symbolism, the difference which you think to find there: the Tao "without a name" is the metaphysical Zero, indicated perhaps even more clearly there than everywhere else; it is only the Tao "with a name" that can be identified with the "Great Unity" (Tai i), represented by the Pole; but I wonder if Granet has any idea of this quite essential distinction; as for the two, it indeed represents "polarization" everywhere: the couples "Heaven-Earth", "Yin-Yang", etc., are indeed always fundamentally aspects of the Purusha Prakriti duality (contained in the unity of Īshwara or Being). And it is with three that the manifestation properly begins: "one has produced two, two has produced three, three has produced all the numbers" (which we all have in effect as soon as we have four, since  $1+2+3+4 = 10$ ; and this is why, in Chinese ideograms, the sign  $+$  = 10, and 10 to the power of 4 = 10000 designates the indefiniteness of all beings).

In the Tai-Ki diagram, there is not really a vertical axis, because it must be viewed as drawn in a horizontal plane; one could only say that one of the axes plays a "relatively vertical" role with respect to the other; but then why would it be the diameter rather than the half-circumference (or better the set of the two half-circumferences)? I see nothing to indicate this, and even the figure as it is usually laid out (see page 280 of Granet's book) seems to indicate quite the contrary. Please tell me if you saw anything else that made you think that; in any case, even if what you say were to occur sometimes, it would still not be an insurmountable difficulty, because it would only be necessary to see in it a particular case of this exchange of numbers and symbols that Granet himself points out to several occasions (exchange of even and odd numbers between Heaven and Earth, attribution of the square to Fo-hi and the compass to Niu-Koua, etc.), but including, moreover, his mania for "sociological" explanations prevents him from understanding the true meaning, because, satisfied with what he thinks he has found from this point of view, he does not even think of looking further...

As usual, I end with your numbered questions: 1°. The sentence that you

point out to me in the "Gift" cannot have a pantheistic meaning, because of these words: "from the absolute point of view", which necessarily imply that the set of beings is considered as a principal totality; what precedes, that is to say the affirmation of the difference "from the relative point of view" (which is that of all manifestation), precisely excludes any pantheistic or immanentist conception. 2°. Limitation as such is only something purely negative; it therefore has no principled existence, so to speak; there can

be no question of limitation except from the point of view of contingent beings (I think that is what you mean when you speak of the possibilities of manifestation considered as "effected"); the error of point of view, in these beings, consists in taking the limitation (or what results from it, and which is consequently as negative as itself) for a positive attribution. In short, limitation does not proceed from anything other than "distinctivity": each particular possibility, if one considers it separately from the others, becomes thereby exclusive (or negative) of it; but, if we

relates on the contrary to the totality, the limitation thereby disappears, since for the totality there can obviously be no limitation.

3°. a) The states of manifestation other than the human state are well represented by the turns of the helix following one another in different planes; moreover, there is no reason to limit this correspondence in the ascending sense to the bodily modality alone, each state naturally comprising multiple modalities, as well as the human state itself.

b) The difficulty you point out, with regard to the horizontal spirals which move away from the center while widening, corresponds only to an imperfection of the geometric symbolism, which can only be corrected by considering the "opposite direction" : in what is to be represented, it is on the contrary what is the most extensive (that is to say the least limited) which is closest to the center. This difficulty also arises when one wishes to represent the "heavens", following Dante for example: one can only represent them by circles increasing in size from the lowest to the highest, but, at the same time, it is the higher which is nearest to the divine center; this is easily conceivable, but it is impossible to obtain a correct representation of it.

c) I don't see why, in the "ascent" from one state to another, the modalities would necessarily move away from the center, since in each state there are modalities which correspond to those of the others. All that can be said is that, the multiplicity of states being indefinite, the "ascent" would continue indefinitely, if the being, in a certain state (which moreover can be arbitrary), did not manage to effectively reaching the very center, which then allows it to escape through the axis, instead of continuing to revolve indefinitely around the cylinder (in the rotation of "samsâra"). 4°. If the freedom of

the individual human being is of the order of infinitesimal quantities, it is because the individuality itself is so too, when it is related to the whole; it cannot be that it is not strictly proportionate.

On the other hand, it is quite obvious that, if we speak of the freedom which properly belongs to the human individual as such, it can only be applied within his cycle of human manifestation, this which amounts to saying that it appears as zero as soon as we leave this cycle; but, of course, it is not zero when we confine ourselves to the consideration of the activity of the individual man.

Believe, I beg you, Sir, in my best and distinguished sentiments.

RG

(M)

Cairo, September 23, 1935.

Sir, Thank

you first of all for sending me; I haven't received it yet, but that's no wonder, because, in general, postal parcels are about a month on the way! So I'll talk to you another time about the contents of this parcel... -- Thank you also for the coupon attached to your letter.

What you say about Leconte de Lisle's poem does not surprise me, and basically confirms what I thought: the last two lines must represent a formula

that he found I don't know where and that he will have reproduced without really understanding it...

I only know of J. de Gaultier his "Metaphysical Sensibility", which he had sent me and which, moreover, I had a terrible time reading to the end; and I have never been able to figure out exactly where he was coming from... If the "Bovaryism" of which you speak can give a somewhat clearer idea of his theories, I therefore gladly accept your offer to give it to me. communicate, because perhaps I would know better by that what to believe on his account! 1°. I have just re-read Granet's note again (page 280), but I cannot see how the two half-circumferences,

the whole of which forms a curve winding around the relatively vertical axis, would be generated by the plot of the other axis; the question, as you say, is probably only of secondary importance, but in any case I must admit that there is something in the way you consider the figure that escapes me...

2°. For the passage of the "Gift", the explanation you are considering this time is certainly correct, and I do not see that there is anything to add to it. 3°. For the question of limitation,

perhaps the difficulties that you expose come above all from the fact that a purely logical point of view can no longer be of any help beyond a certain domain; in any case it can then represent nothing more than a kind of very imperfect translation... Be that as it may, it is understood that, from the point of view of the absolute (if one can say ), that is to say on the side of the Principle, there can be no errors or, to speak more exactly, no illusions; this can therefore only be found on the side of manifestation, and it is necessarily found there as inherent to manifestation itself as such, since the latter implies a multiplicity whose elements, considered distinctively, cannot be may not limit each other. This, in short, is what conditions any manifestation, which is therefore only relative and contingent, which again amounts to saying that it is illusory in relation to the Principle. The illusion disappears with the distinctive point of view, but also the manifestation thereby. Now, if one wonders why this is so, the question basically is without object: it is, quite simply, because every possibility is realized in the way that its nature entails, and that of the possibilities of manifestation entails necessarily and by very definition, this realization which can only be in illusory mode; but it must be clearly understood that illusory does not mean unreal, but only of a lesser degree of reality, since the illusion always has its foundation in the principal reality of the possibilities. -- I don't know if I can explain the thing very clearly, but at least what is certain is that the difficulties here are only due to language, as elsewhere always when it is necessary to consider things both from the side of the Principle and from the side of manifestation. 4°. It is obvious that the being which enlarges its domain (whether in a vertical or horizontal movement), and which thereby frees itself from certain limitations, cannot be said to move away from the center; it could rather be said to approach it, although, strictly speaking, it is always at the same distance from it as long as some limitation remains, because of the incommensurability of the absolute and of everything relative (and this is why Deliverance implies a radical discontinuity with respect to any conditioned state, being outside the indefinite series of these states). Basically, he

It is always a question of the same inevitable imperfection of geometric symbolism; it should also be noted that, in this one, the center of the being must be considered as indefinitely remote from the axis of the cylinder, the points of the latter which we can figure representing only the respective centers of the different states . -- But, in any case, I do not see that one can use a word like that of "mechanism"; we could probably say that this is also only a way of speaking, but I think that it can only lead to false ideas too easily. Moreover, in all cases, and even when it is only a question of the simple point of view of ordinary physics, the mechanism is certainly only an erroneous representation, and this is where one of the main defects lies. modern scientific theories; perhaps I could explain myself more fully on this in the volume that I propose to write as soon as I can finally find the time... 5°. It is well understood that nothingness is only pure impossibility, and, consequently, the "conversion" that

you envisage on the borders of the indefinite imposes itself indeed; there is a kind of "stopping point" there, as there is also analogically from the cosmic point of view, in the cyclic periods. -- A nothingness having some positivity is properly inconceivable; it is true that there are, especially in Western philosophical conceptions, many other "pseudo-ideas" which are no less contradictory...

What is on page 169 of the "Symbolism of the Cross" is a quotation from the "Metaphysical Way", what you say about it seems to me to be correct, because the hypothesis envisaged is obviously only realizable if we place ourselves in outside the two states considered; the words "current" and "previous" no longer apply except to indicate the order of their causal sequence; and it is, moreover, clear that individual consciousness cannot extend beyond the limits of individuality.

Believe, I beg you, Sir, in my best and distinguished sentiments.

RG

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(NOT)

Cairo, October 12, 1935.

Sir, I

received your letter the day before yesterday, which crossed with the note in which I announced the safe arrival of your package; your other package also reached me at the same time, and I thank you for it. -- I prefer, when I can, to answer letters immediately, because otherwise there are so many that I can't find my way around...

Thank you for Nâjârjuna's treatise; I agree with you on this dialectic, quite common among the Buddhists and which is almost equal to that of the Greeks! Basically, it's more of an interest of curiosity, because it's obvious that these subtleties can't touch on the essential... The translation is not always very understandable; its author, although Japanese, seems to follow the methods of European orientalists (and in particular Sylvain Lévi), who hardly care whether what they are translating has any meaning whatsoever.

I will speak to you again about J. de Gaultier's book when I have read it; judging by his other more recent work, I doubt very much that there can be in him any influence

appreciable oriental...

The passages of Shakespeare that you quote to me are certainly curious; it is doubtless difficult to know just how far conscious intention goes in the use of such expressions, but there seems no doubt that Shakespeare, or those for whom he spoke, had some knowledge of esoteric order.

You speak to me of the work of M. de Gaigneron; I must admit that I have no idea how he handled certain issues; what I'm a little afraid of is that, despite all the goodwill that I know him to have, he can't manage to express himself in a perfectly clear way on all points... -- Whatever he in itself, the mechanism" is one of the great errors which are at the base of modern scientific conceptions; perhaps I can explain this more completely in the next work that I propose to write as soon as I finally find the time...

For the Tai-Ki figure, one can wonder in what sense exactly the two inner half-circumferences "are worth" the outer half-circumference, because it would not be exact if one took it in the sense of a quantitative equality. On the other hand, I confess that I do not understand that a half-circumference can be generated by drawing a half-diameter; it can only be so by the rotation of the latter, which then no longer has a fixed position like that of the perpendicular to the relatively vertical axis; there is still something that escapes me. For the sentence taken from the "Introduction" of Shankara, your interpretation seems to me quite correct, and I see nothing to add to it.

Finally, as regards the "Secret of the Mantras", I see that a confusion has arisen there which it is important to dissipate. When Shiva is considered as one of the terms of the Trimûrti, he is indeed the "Transformer" principle (a more exact term than that of "destructor": he destroys the manifestation as such, no doubt, but to bring it back to the Principles); but, in such a Saiva text, Shiva is taken as a synonym of Paramâshwara, which contains all the aspects (and then the "transforming" aspect is called Rudra).

Believe, I beg you, Sir, in my best and distinguished sentiments.

RG

(O)

Cairo, October 18, 1935.

Sir, I have

received during this week, two new mailings from you: "A. Esculape" and the "Medical Mind", where I found some interesting articles; thanks again.

In the article on Avicenna, there would be a few inaccuracies to note, notably the usual confusion about "mysticism" (it is curious to see how it is more and more common in the West), and the translation of the word "Hokmah", which means "wisdom", by "philosophy"; this one, in Arabic, is never called other than "falsafah", which is an alteration of its Greek name...

Incidentally, I see, among the announcements of collaboration with the "Medical Spirit", that of a rather sinister character: Elian J. Finbert, too well known here, and very unfavorably from all points of view! This individual felt the need two years ago

or three years, to publish an article about me, in the "Literary News", of gossip as inept as it is untruthful. I don't know if you were reading the "Veil of Isis" at that time, nor therefore if you saw there the answer I gave him... and after which he was careful not to give any sign of life.

I have just read "Bovarisme"; this certainly reads much more easily and more pleasantly than "metaphysical sensibility", but I found the same tendencies already affirmed there: a radical "agnosticism", and even something more, since that goes, as with the sophists Greeks, up to the denial of the truth (and not only of the possibility of knowing it); a rather coarse empiricism at bottom, constantly confusing the idea with the image; and this way of treating everything as a "game"... There is also something curious in the author's confidence in "physiology", in "heredity", etc., whereas, at the same time, he wants to be skeptical of current scientific theories as of everything else; this is rather contradictory! It is, moreover, evident that when he speaks of "metaphysics", he means this word in a sense which has nothing in common with ours; and, as for possible oriental influences, I see hardly any others, for my part, than an idea of "mâyâ" rather misunderstood and distorted...

I haven't had time to see Oldenberg's larger book yet; but I now have so many things of yours that I really believe I will have to send them back to you in two installments, because of the weight. If so, I will distribute the books according to their format, so that the packages are less likely to be damaged or undone.

on the way.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(P)

Cairo, October 31, 1935.

Sir,

I have received several more mailings from you since I wrote to you; I do not want delay no longer in acknowledging receipt and thanking you for everything.

The issue of "Visages du Monde" devoted to India is very well illustrated; as for the articles, as they have in short only a "picturesque" character, there is nothing to complain about... except, however, with regard to certain notes on the temples, including the tone, which wants to be "pleasant", is in rather bad taste. Do you know exactly what this "Titayna" is, which I had already heard of as an aviator, but about which I don't really know anything specific?

By a rather curious coincidence, I also received, just at the same time, an issue of the "Monthly Larousse" which contains an article on "Indian thought"; but this is, to tell the truth, only a summary of the current opinions of Orientalists...

Doctor Carrel's interview surprised me a little, pleasantly moreover, because I did not think that he was one of those who realize the inevitable outcome of modern civilization; what he says about the repercussions of certain inventions on human beings is perfectly correct.

The account of Chesterton's book on St. Thomas does not give the impression of anything very profound; I once read a book by him whose

title escapes me; it seems that he sometimes has rather curious ideas, but perhaps above all by the paradoxical form in which he presents them.

About Ravaisson, I wonder if it is true that Bergson understood it so well that it is said: it would indeed seem that Ravaisson glimpsed something of intellectual intuition, although it always remained vague. his home ; for Bergson, on the contrary, it is only ever a question of sensible intuition; What confusion due to not knowing how to make this essential distinction!

The story reported in the "Gringoire" article is quite curious; unfortunately, articles like this are so "fictionalized" in general that you can never know exactly what's real in it...

Finally, I received yesterday the continuation of the study on the mandrake, and I see that it must be continued still. There are some really curious things in there from a "documentary" point of view; moreover, the author obviously has a rather singular idea of esotericism in general and hermeticism in particular; it must be said that he seems to owe it in large part to modern "occultists", especially to Eliphas Lévi; we will never know how many misconceptions these people will have helped to spread!

I think I will soon be able to return four volumes to you: those of J. de Gaultier, Mukerji, Tucci, and the "Buddhist Meditation". Because of the format, as I told you the last time, I will save R. Jollivet's brochure to send it back to you at the same time as Oldenberg's book, when I have read this one.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(Q)

Cairo, November 17, 1935.

Sir, I

received your letter of November 5 this week; Since the last time I wrote to you, I also received your shipment of three articles from "Passiflora"; the figures that are reproduced in there are really curious and I thank you for that.

For my part, I sent you a package last week containing four books, as I had told you; it is therefore no longer time to think of another mode of sending, but, in any case, I do not think that the difference in costs can be very considerable. It therefore only remains for me to send you back the pamphlet on "metaphysical intuition" and Oldenberg's book; I haven't had time to see it yet.

Thank you very much for your offer to send me the "History of the Far East" of Grouset; if really that should not deprive you, I accept it with pleasure.

The "Tales of Simple Goha" are not by Finbert, but by Georges Adis, who has been dead for quite a long time. As for Finbert, he had formerly founded in Alexandria a review entitled "Les Messages d'Orient", with Carlo Suarès (the admirer of Krishnamurti); but, this one having not taken long to realize that it was especially a pretext to extract funds from him, this magazine ceased to appear after 5 or 6 numbers.

On the subject of J. de Gaultier, the comparisons that you indicate could no doubt be supported, but I believe that, if they exist, it is without his knowledge; this

Moreover, nothing changes with regard to its general tendencies, which are obviously opposed to any traditional doctrine.

I don't know anything about Calderon apart from what was said in the "Veil of Isis"; the first article had struck me as a little vague, and gave me the impression of things of which Calderon himself might well not have been very clearly aware; but I must admit that the last seems to me much more precise and more convincing in this respect. 1°. I now understand better what

led to your remarks on the figure of Tai-Ki, but, as you yourself admit, these assimilations do not seem to me to be perfectly accurate. If we consider the circumference as representing a passive aspect, its correlative, corresponding to the active aspect, is nothing other than its center itself, which is moreover the trace of the vertical axis in the horizontal plane; and this correlation cannot be assimilated purely and simply to that of the two axes of the horizontal plane (which are two rectangular diameters of the circumference).

2°. For the evolutionary helix, the upward direction is not a simple postulate, but a necessary consequence of the continuity existing between all the states of manifestation by the very fact of their causal sequence. As for the exhalation phase, which you envision as descending, the truth is that it does not involve a state of manifestation; what can be called the "emission" of beings in the current of manifestation must be considered as taking place at a point indefinitely distant downwards, just as the return to the Principle takes place at a point indefinitely distant to the top; but, in reality, these two extremes coincide, the origin and the end being absolutely identical. -- I would add that one cannot simply consider expansion and concentration as succeeding one another; one and the other are always found at all levels of manifestation, which gives rise in the latter to apparently "antinomic" aspects; there are rather complex considerations to bring in if we want to go into more precise details in this respect...

3°. Your point of view could indeed be supported if the being were assured of finding, in another state, a "central" position corresponding to that of man in ours, but this is only one possibility among an indefiniteness of others; there is therefore a much greater chance that he will be disadvantaged by his transition to another state. It is in this sense that we must understand what is said in I do not know which text, that "human birth (or its analog) is difficult to obtain".

4°. I do not have, for the moment, the leisure to examine very closely the passages of the "Chhândogya Upanishad" that you indicate to me, but it does not seem to me that there are very great difficulties there.

5, 10, 7. - You are right to say that we must see there only analogies; there are, moreover, similar ones in many other texts (for example in Plato); but Theosophists and others who understand nothing of symbolism take everything in the most crudely literal and "earthly" sense...

6, 2, 1-2. -- The interpretation of the passage may give rise to doubts, because the expression "Non-being" does not always and everywhere have the same meaning and may not

not necessarily relate to What is beyond being (example: the (???) of Plato, which is only indistinguishable potentiality). Now, it must also be said that Râmânûja's point of view corresponds to a certain level of reality; there must therefore be passages in the Upanishads which can relate to it, as there are for any other legitimate point of view in its order.

8, 11, 1-3. -- It seems to me that "deep sleep" is considered here as "non-knowledge" only in relation to manifestation; and it is indeed beyond distinctive knowledge.

8, 12, 1. - The difference between the "jîvan-mukti" and the "vidîha-mukti" is in short only in the appearances which they present for the others; the "jivan-mukti" itself cannot really be regarded as "incorporated", since it is no longer affected, conditioned or limited by the body; moreover, the conditioned state being null compared to the unconditioned, what difference could the presence or the absence of the body make as regards the possibility of obtaining Deliverance?

The coupon attached to your letter is not valid, as it was not postmarked; I am therefore obliged to return it to you herewith, and I hope that you will be able to have this omission rectified without difficulty.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(R)

Cairo, December 24, 1935.

Sir, A few

days ago I received your letter of December 10, as well as the articles which you announced to me therein, and for which I thank you; and you must know by now that your postal parcel reached me the week before.

I will return the "Journal Médical" to you at the same time as your two books which I still have; of Oldenberg's, I have so far only managed to read the introduction: what a complete misunderstanding of the Vedic doctrines!

I did not receive the "Five Wisdom Lama"; I therefore gladly accept your offer to communicate it to me as well. What you tell me about it may correspond to a conception of certain Buddhist schools; there are surely some that it would be very difficult to exempt from any reproach of contradiction... On the other hand, it is true that the Theosophists, at least at the beginning, recommended themselves above all to Tibetan Buddhism, but I think that it is very wrong; there as elsewhere, the human "renaissances" have only a very symbolic significance. -- As for the "magical" phenomena of which you speak about Milarepa, they may very well be real; I do not see at all what can oppose it; the question that arises about things of this kind is not that of their reality, but that of the importance that should be attributed to them.

No, I don't know the translation of "Brihad-Aranyaka Up. " by Sénart; the sample you quoted to me does not seem to testify to a great understanding, which moreover does not surprise me. -- I do not know if I told you that the one which was published under the name of Hérold is in reality a collective work, in which Sylvain Lévi, Foucher and others collaborated; but, because of their situations

"official", they prefer not to sign it and hide behind Hérold who, I believe, never knew Sanskrit...

I haven't had time to read Gaigneron's book yet, so I can't tell you much about it at the moment; I have to say that, in general, I don't really like the dialogue form... On the other hand, I'm a little afraid, from what I've seen, that launched sometimes, for example in connection with theology, in considerations which would have required to be approached only with more precautions. As for his "checkerboard" theory, I guess that development is his own, because I haven't seen it anywhere else; for the sentence that you point out, I admit that, until further examination, it does not seem perfectly clear to me.

I do not think that the passage in Abdul-Hâdi's article where it is a question of "collective hallucination" about the sensible world should be interpreted in a "subjectivist" sense, but rather in the sense of "mâyâ" "Hindu; moreover, hallucination is never, at bottom, anything but an error relating to the mode or degree of reality of something, for one cannot in any case perceive what would be absolutely unreal. There is also, in this passage, an allusion to the cosmogonic role of man, in relation to the "central" position he occupies in this world, and as a result of which this one, as a whole, effectively depends on him somehow. -- Subject to these reservations, the comparisons that you note are no less interesting, especially as far as Daudet is concerned. However, I have the impression that there is in the ideas of this one, as far as these articles make me understand them, something which is not entirely "clarified" and developed; it is a pity that he never takes the time to delve more completely into the questions he touches... On the other hand, it is perhaps regrettable that he took this word "universals" which may give rise to confusion, for it is a term known to scholastic philosophy, but with a meaning quite different from that which he gives it somewhat arbitrarily.

I now have, through the article in the "Journal Médical", a clearer and more complete idea of Doctor Carrel's book; you're probably right about that, and it does seem that the critical part is indeed the best; as for what he envisages to remedy the misdeeds of modern civilization, it is doubtful that all this can have very great effectiveness. Moreover, it seems that many people are finally realizing the drawbacks of so-called "progress", but that they hardly see how it would be possible to get out of this situation, because it is always the principles that are lacking to them. ..

I was completely unfamiliar with Pawlow's work; it's curious, but I wonder if it can go very far; it is understood that the "psychic" and the corporeal are linked, contrary to the Cartesian conception, but, despite everything, it seems that methods of this kind only make it possible to grasp the most superficial manifestations.

I see that Finbert continues to pretend to deal with the Orient, which he hardly knows, because, like all his fellows, he has only ever lived here in Western or "Westernized" circles. "That makes me think of the Voronoff brothers, who are of a similar origin: I learned lately that they had formerly exercised the

medicine here, and that they had left because of the lack of success they were having with the clientele... 1°.

Your statements seem completely correct to me, except that, speaking of the helix as a whole, one cannot call it "individual trajectory", since its various whorls correspond to all the states of manifestation, individual or not.

As for the other aspect, if it is not figurable, it is because it is reduced to the point that mathematicians incorrectly say "at infinity" on the axis, that is to say at the point where the two extremities of it meet and coincide.

2°. I don't think you can really say that the human state and the non-human state that follows it are "alien to each other", since they are two manifestations of the same being; they are foreign only insofar as they are considered separately as individualities; but, as soon as one goes beyond the limits of a single state, it is not the individuality which is to be considered, it is what it is not a manifestation of among the others.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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(S)

Cairo, January 26, 1936.

Sir, I

received your letter of January seventh, at the same time as the cuts that you announced to me, then an issue of "Art and Medicine" and the continuation of the study on the mandrake, and finally I come to receive the "Five Wisdom Lama", whom I was waiting for to answer you; I thank you very much for it, and I will speak to you about it again when I have read it.

I think I will be able to send back to you shortly what I still have, for I have at last almost finished Oldenberg's book; it is certainly a conscientious work from the historical point of view, but his Western prejudices sometimes assert themselves with a curious naivety, for example when he wants to make certain comparisons with Christianity, of which he seems to have the most stupidly sentimental idea. you can imagine! I will not return to the introduction, because I have already told you what I thought of it; there is total misunderstanding...

As for the magical phenomena of which you speak, I know that they exist, but I must say that I have never had the curiosity to seek to see them; I just have to understand the possibility, which is the only interesting thing about it. -- This reminds me of a story: Someone once told Mohyid-din ibn Arabi a character who rose in the air and did other extraordinary things of this kind; Mohyiddin replied simply: "You must believe that he is a man who does not have much to do!"

For Dr. Pron's article on "metagnomy", I see that in short he tries to accommodate all the hypotheses, including that of the spiritualists, which is a bit annoying; as for the history of the "akashic archives", it is a pure and simple borrowing from the theosophists, and it is quite obvious that there is a great confusion there between

the bodily order and the subtle order.

I have never written anything on Plotinus, and I even confess that I have never had time to study him closely; but I know that there are in fact many comparisons to be made with Eastern doctrines, so that I am in no way surprised by those that you have raised, and which seem to me to be completely justified. Only, there is one thing that has always surprised me: it is this story of states that Plotinus would have reached a certain number of times in his life, and which, by this very fact, seem to have had nothing permanent. , which is difficult to understand from the initiatic point of view; there would have been there, in any case, something very incomplete as far as the realization is concerned.

1°. The difficulty that you note for the use of the word "informal" seems inevitable to me, because we are forced to apply it to everything that escapes, in any way whatsoever, the individual condition.

2°. The states of manifestation which follow one another are, without doubt, foreign to each other in a certain sense, but only if they are considered in themselves and separately, which never corresponds to anything but the the most exterior, and in no way to the very reality of being. -- I'm glad my last article gave you some insight; but can we really speak of something which would be legitimate for the "ignorant" man, when, at bottom, it is in reality "ignorance" itself which is illegitimate?

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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(T)

Cairo, April 30, 1936.

Sir,

Yesterday I received the packet of books you told me about, and although I wrote to you a few days ago, I don't want to delay any longer in thanking you for it, as well as for another sending arrived at the same time, and in which I found the N° of "Art and Medicine" on Syria, as well as some articles and extracts of Gobineau; shall I return these to you with the books?

The ideas of Gobineau, on many points, are certainly not reconcilable with traditional doctrines; to speak of a sacred Book as of a human composition is, for us, something truly unheard of! -- as for Babism, it is quite impossible to find Mazdean influences there as he claims; it is Islamic heresy and nothing else. There are, with regard to letters and numbers, applications of the traditional sciences, but largely diverted in a heterodox sense. None of all this has survived, because Babism has become Behaism, which is no more than a vague "moralism" for the use of Westerners...

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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(U)

Cairo, June 2, 1936.

Sir, Your

letter arrived at the same time as the article on Rasputin, for which I thank you. I have often observed, in fact, that the natural "powers" of healers and others of this kind are found above all in people who, from the intellectual point of view, are very coarse and narrow-minded. In the present case, however, there is something else, in the sense that it does not seem doubtful that the character was used as an instrument, probably more or less unconscious. Curiously enough, the organ of a pseudo-Rosicrucian organization in America recently published an article presenting Rasputin both as a great politician and as a true saint!

Last week, while continuing to put away my books, I found Gobineau's, which I no longer knew I had; as you say, there is not much interesting in it, and it is very superficial.

Thank you for your offer for Madame David-Neel's books, but I have all the ones you list. I knew her nearly thirty years ago; she was a Theosophist at that time; she is surely intelligent, but seems to have never been able to get rid of the attraction of "phenomena"; on the other hand, she's quite intriguing and not very disinterested, and I've always wondered if her travels didn't have some political undertones.

For Wells' book, "The Island of Doctor Moreau", I only know the title; since you are good enough to communicate it to me, I therefore accept very willingly.

Contrary to what we thought, Mr. Riv. did us the service of his book; I thus found myself under the obligation to make a report of it which you will see in one of the next issues of ET I will therefore be able to send you back your copy with the other volumes that you have lent me.

I read Chevillon's book; what concerns Bhagavan Dos is quite in line with what I thought; the author has certainly not distorted the words of his interlocutor, which are indeed those, not of a "pandit", but of a theosophist. The "Central Hindu College" of Benares has never been anything other than an institution dependent on ST, and Arundale has long been its director.

I'm not surprised that you can't find the "King of the World", because it's been completely out of print for a long time, as well as the "Esotericism of Dante"; I have every intention of having them reissued, but I don't really know when that will be possible, because I would like to make quite significant additions to both of them.

It is quite true that the gross state only represents a modality, and not the entirety of a degree of existence; but one can however also consider a "center" for this modality, because the analogy applies to all the degrees; according to the saying of the Prophet, "Everything has a heart". -- On the other hand, it is evident that the gross manifestation could not even exist without subtle elements, just as the subtle manifestation, in its turn, would not exist without an unmanifest principle; this is, in short, a question of "causal" hierarchy to be observed...

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(V)

Cairo, July 1, 1936.

Sir, It's

already been a fortnight since I received an issue of "Aesculape" from you, and I apologize for not having thanked you sooner. -- There are some rather curious things in this issue, in particular this story of the "Sciapodes" which made me think of other things of the same kind: I often wondered what could be the origin of these descriptions of fantastic beings found among the ancients, and whether there would not be a good deal of symbolism there which, at a certain period, would have ceased to be understood. It is, moreover, quite probable that geography was formerly something quite different from what it is for the moderns... -- A story of this kind which still persists is that of the "men ": I know people here who are convinced that there really are some somewhere in Sudan or Ethiopia...

I also found in the same envelope an article on a so-called "case of reincarnation"; even if the facts reported are correct, it is obvious that they must be explained otherwise. As the interval is not sufficient for it to be "ancestral memory", there would be a case of an almost complete transfer of the psychic elements from one individuality to another, which, to be exceptional, is certainly not impossible.

As I cannot finish my reading at the moment, I am going, so as not to make you wait too long, to send you at least the two books by Marquès-Rivière and Chevrillon, as well as the article by Bréhier on Plotinus. -- It would probably not be possible for me, because of the weight, to return everything to you at once by post; and, if I have no difficulty in receiving a postal parcel here, I would have more to send one..

Please believe, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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(W)

Cairo, July 3, 1936.

Sir, When

I had just written to you and sent you, as I told you, part of the books, I received your letter containing new extracts from Plotinus, as well as your dispatch of "Visages du Monde" and miscellaneous items; thank you for all!

For Plotinus, the titles you have given to the different passages seem to me to be on the whole very suitable; Besides, it does not seem improbable to me that Plotinus, in Alexandria, could have been in direct contact with representatives of different Eastern doctrines. Only, with regard to the question of "mâyâ" of which you speak, I admit that things do not appear to me in a perfectly clear way: there is in him a theory of "intelligible matter" which can relate to it, but which I have never seen set out very clearly anywhere... of "local movement" or change of situation,

which is just a special case.

I thank you for your offer to send me the published volumes of the "Enneads", but I cannot really accept, at least for the time being, because it would be quite impossible for me to find the time to read it with the necessary attention.

I know Doctor Fiolle very well, and I had known for some time that he was preparing this book; it even seems that he must have sent it to me, but, oddly enough, I did not receive it, so that I wonder if it was lost in the post office or if it is publisher negligence, which sometimes happens; in any case, I think that the matter will soon be cleared up and that finally I will receive the volume, which, in any case, is indeed inspired by traditional doctrine, as you have noticed.

I didn't know what you tell me about Doctor Carrel's wife, and who can explain certain things about her ideas, where there is surely a lot of "mixing"...

Elie Faure's article is, as you say, rather obscure, but on the whole quite modern in inspiration, if only by the tendency to take change for an end in itself; and, if life were really no more than what he says in conclusion, I don't see very well how there could be any reason to take it so "joyfully", or even to give it only a any interest!

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(X)

Cairo, August 18, 1936.

Sir, The

consignment you told me about and which I thought was lost finally reached me yesterday, and everything you told me was there; it was therefore only a matter of a simple delay in the post, which moreover is often very irregular, especially for printed matter.

It seems that Daudet was quite aware of some of the "deficiencies" in Carrel's book; but does he himself know very exactly what the "spiritual" is in reality and in all that it implies? I fear that, on this point, he is sticking to religious notions of a completely exoteric order...

As for Claudel, I wonder if he really takes himself seriously; it seems to me that, in his case as in that of Valéry, there is a lot of "game of ideas"!

I am told that Bergson would have converted to Catholicism; but I wonder if this news is really true or if it is only a simple noise; Have you heard of it ?

As for the "discoveries" of current physics, I don't know if something a little less confusing will eventually come out of it; for the moment, even what may be true in this only presents itself as more or less inconsistent theories and hypotheses; and can it be otherwise in a "science" which does not start from true principles, and which only manages "by chance" to find some

bits of truth?

For monsters, you're absolutely right; it is certain that there is in all this multiple confusions between very different things. Pliny's "Natural History" is one of the finest examples I know of this mixture of observed facts and misunderstood symbolism... In any case, for the story of Pythagoras' "golden thigh", whose it is discussed in the article you sent me, there is no doubt about its purely symbolic character; it is moreover directly linked to the symbolism of the Hyperborean Apollo.

I read the "Isle of Doctor Moreau," where it is also a question of monsters, but of artificial monsters; and that made me think of that vanished island of which Diodorus of Sicily speaks, where extraordinary men and animals would have lived, which would also have been the product of certain experiences; it is possible, after all, that Wells knew about this story and that it helped give him the idea for his book...

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(Y)

Cairo, August 24, 1936.

Sir, I have

finally finished reading all that I still have for you, that is to say the two volumes of Maeterlinck, that of Valéry and that of Wells. I prefer not to keep them any longer, especially since if more were added, it would end up being too large for a single shipment. I am therefore making a package of them which I will send you no doubt in two or three days, at the same time as other shipments which I will then have to make at the post office.

About "The Island of Doctor Moreau", I thought these days that one could quite easily transpose this whole story in the subtle order, like that of a magician who gave artificial individuality to "wandering influences", which one day end up turning against him and killing him, and which then, when he is no longer there to maintain them, gradually disintegrate and return to their first state; but, of course, it is more than unlikely that Wells had this idea!

For Valéry, my impression is indeed, as I told you the other day, that of a simple "game of ideas" under which there is not much (or, if there is sometimes something all the same, he did not want it); this kind of parody of intelligence, if one can say so, has always been a fairly common thing in France, unfortunately... -- I remember having read once, by the same Valéry, a "Introduction to the method of Leonardo da Vinci" where there were many more or less questionable views, but which, despite everything, was certainly less "hollow" than his chapter on "Leonardo and the Philosophers". -- The "Fear of the Dead" is truly unheard of!

As for Maeterlinck, his case is different, for there is apparently much more sincerity in him; but, if the reflections of his whole life could only lead to this kind of "agnosticism" it's really sad... I'm not very surprised by it after what I already had seen from him, but it seems that there are still less and

less "glimmers" and that his mental horizon is shrinking; and I believe that this happens quite often to those who have not been able to overcome a certain "philosophical" point of view...

Please believe, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(Z)

Cairo, September 3, 1936.

Sir, This

morning I received your letter of August 27, your dispatch of articles and your package of books; everything you told me was there, thank you very much. -- It is understood that I will return the "Palis Tales" and the "Idée Fixe" to you; as for Wells's book, I have already sent it back to you with the others, and perhaps you even have them now. While I was in Wells, he was indeed part of a sort of group which had drawn up the plan of a social organization called "panarchy", and where there were people who had belonged to Theosophist circles (this pre-war date); but from there to wanting to make him an "esotericist", there is really a long way...

I have Crowd Psychology by G. Le Bon; this one was certainly very intelligent, but rather bad faith in certain respects; thus he never wanted to recognize that it was to his stay in India that he owed the origin of many of his ideas.

I have no idea what "Kodo" means, which is obviously a Japanese word; in any case, the way in which the current policy of Japan is carried out is indeed all that is furthest from Taoist principles!

What you say of Daudet is quite correct. -- As for Lavelle, I have never been able to define his tendencies well, but I have always had the impression that he was not capable of going very far; moreover, university philosophical training is really a terrible thing, and I believe that it must be very difficult to get rid of the limitations it imposes...

The article on Freud reminded me of old stories: R. Dalbier, the author of the book referred to therein, and who is a disciple of Maritain, manifested, in various circumstances, a fierce hatred against me !

As for the article on Newton, it is really curious indeed, but, if it clearly shows his interest in alchemy, it in no way proves that he had an effective link with Masonry; his relations with Desaguliers, which the author forgot to mention, do not themselves prove anything in this respect either.

The "Spiritual Error" and the "Theosophism" are indeed two entirely distinct books. -- As for the "Crisis of the Modern World", it is by no means exhausted; like "Man and His Future", it was taken over by Denoël and Sterle (19, rue Amélie) following the Bonard bankruptcy; but what seems really strange to me is that there are already several people who have been given the same answer as you.

Obviously, for the "democratization" of Catholicism, I thought of the trend you mention, and also of these current "movements" singularly illustrated by the emblem of which you send me the reproduction. -- Mauras' article is still in line with what I said in the same report; it's even enough

surprising on his part, but you have to believe that some things end up all the same becoming a little too apparent... -- It is true that all of this falls within the universal order, as you say, but a reason for shutting oneself up in a kind of "quietism"; on this point, I would ask you to wait for the articles that I propose to write for the next issues of "Et. Trad.", and which will perhaps bring some clarifications to all these questions.

As for "organization", I do not think it is very useful to try to give much precision in the present circumstances; however, it is a fact that the initiatory organizations which have not undergone a certain degeneration do not take the form of "societies".

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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(Z1)

Cairo, September 19, 1936.

Sir, I have

taken note of the contents of your last dispatch, and I will return to you these days, as agreed, the book of Valéry and the "Palis Tales"; I think my other package has reached you.

The "Palis Tales" (it's the first time I've seen this word spelled like this with an h) are really good; only, the title of the "King of the World" is not absolutely justified, and I have moreover a doubt on the accuracy of the note placed at the top and concerning certain statues covered with royal ornaments, which, from usual, are regarded simply as representing the Bodhisattva before he attained the state of Buddha.

The "Magic Tales" are less interesting, as you told me; I wonder, however, if some of them at least would not have a double meaning, but which, of course, can hardly be seen in a version like this.

The "Song of Hiawatha", which I only knew by name, contains some really curious things; it's a shame that we sometimes feel a certain "arrangement", especially in the end...

As for the "Idee fixe", you were quite right to speak of "virtuosity", but it is a rather disappointing virtuosity, and which ultimately only further confirms my opinion of its author; I would be very surprised if, deep down, he was something other than a kind of skeptic who likes to turn ideas upside down...

What I notice even more particularly in this respect is its formal denial that there is anything immutable in the mind; and it is also quite clear that what he conceives as "spirit" is in reality nothing more or other than the mind...

In "Unity of Asia", what is especially interesting to note is the recognition of the "spiritual" character of Eastern civilizations; but, after that, how can anyone continue to place himself resolutely on the side where he admits that spirituality is lacking? These are the enigmas of the Western mentality... Besides, there are right things, but also errors, for example for Russia, which

has few real affinities with Asia; the author seems to have based himself there above all on the affirmations of a certain "Eurasian party" which, even among the Russians, hardly anyone takes seriously; these people once tried to get in touch with me, but I quickly dropped a correspondence that was completely devoid of interest...

We have not received Madame David-Néel's book on Buddhism, and it is highly unlikely that we will receive it now; I therefore accept the offer you kindly made to send it to me, and I thank you in advance.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

.....  
(Z2)

Cairo, September 26, 1936.

Sir, I

received your letter and your dispatch of articles at the same time; thanks at all. For my part, I sent you the two books the day before yesterday, as I told you in a last letter.

I do not know "Au pays des brigands gentilshommes" of which you speak to me; I think it's the only book by Madame David-Néel (apart from the last one) that I haven't read.

Semenoff's article is really a mess; Besides, that doesn't surprise me on his part... As for the article on Yoga, it's even more ridiculous; I have been told, however, that the book by C. Kerneiz (F. Guyot) referred to therein is better than the generality of Western productions on the same subject; moreover, I have seen various articles by him which, without going very far, were at least quite sensible (especially against the hustle and bustle of modern life).

The article of the "Cross" against Buddhism is especially remarkable for its insulting attacks; it is curious that there are people for whom this seems to take the place of an argument! Apart from that, we find there above all the confusions common in the West... On the other hand, it must be said that Japanese Buddhism, at least as regards the branches which are cited in the circumstances, is itself a species of "modernism" strongly influenced by Western ideas.

I had already seen stories about the "Talking mongoose" in English magazines; we do not really know what is true in that, but, in any case, if the thing is authentic, it can only be a question of the manifestation of a "wandering influence"; as for the "canshee", I did not know the word, but these "premonitory" phenomena, in various forms, are indeed quite common in certain countries.

What M. de Unammoro says hardly seems to me to be able to be interpreted otherwise than you do: since he expressly excludes alcoholism as a pathological cause, it is probable that it must be syphilis; but is it really widespread to such an extent in Spain? I confess that I don't know...

The article on Blondel surprised me a little; one must believe, according to this, that a certain change took place in him, for what I knew of him indicated above all very modern tendencies and, in many ways, related to those of Bergson. Perhaps this change is due to the disappearance of Father Laberthonnière,

who exercised a very great influence over him; some even assure that, in the work on "Action", there is in reality more of Father Laberthonnière than of Blondel himself.

I don't know much about Ch. Nicole, but the way you envision his conversion seems to me to be the most plausible; the importance given to facts of this kind does not really seem very justified... As for the impression produced by Duhamel, it is easily understood when you know how sentimental he himself is!

The extract from M. de Saint-Aulaire's book is indeed interesting; there are only reservations to be made on the expression "wise man of Zion", which is only an allusion to the too famous mystification of the "protocols". Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the character in question seems to come under the "counter-initiation" to one degree or another; the case is not very rare among Jews who have lost the sense of their tradition. We must not exaggerate their part in this; one could also cite characters who are in no way Jewish and who play an even more important role in this respect...

What is most amazing is Daudet's article on the great pyramid; I have already noticed rather often in him admirations and rather bizarre excitements, but, this time, it really exceeds the measure. I have just read this book by Barbarin, and you will see what I will say about it in my reviews; for the moment, therefore, I will content myself with pointing out to you that the propaganda of "pyramidal" prophecies, so to speak, is still one of the mysteries of English politics; so, I am wondering if Daudet's "Anglophilia", which is pushed very far, would not have something to do with the interest he took in this story...

I have had the English edition of the "Bardo-Thödol" for a long time but I have not seen the French translation, which has not been sent to us; also, I did not have the occasion to speak about it in the "Voile d'Isis". The transposition of which you speak seems to me quite correct; moreover, considering things this way, it is still a question of the "intermediate world", where the transition from one state to another takes place. I think exactly like you for the "Shûnya" and, in a more general way, the Mâhâyânist doctrine is really traditional on many points where it appears in short as much more Saiva than Buddhist in the ordinary sense of this word. On the crucial "dorje" (karma-vajra) and various other forms, you just happen to see something in an article on "symbolic weapons" that I wrote for mid-October.

Your remarks about Ulysses are very correct; his travels have always been regarded in antiquity as having an initiatory significance (as well as that of the Argonauts). It even seems that there was a whole esoteric and traditional interpretation of Homer, which would only have been lost in relatively recent times; Mario Meunier, who naturally had the opportunity to study these questions more closely, is completely convinced of this.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

(Z3)

Cairo, October 18, 1936

Sir, Thank

you for your shipment of books which arrived at the same time as your letter of October 4th. If I understand correctly, I will have to return only the two volumes of Ms. David-Néel to you.

I have already read several books by Seabrook, but I did not know this one; in general, there are nevertheless quite interesting things here and there, because he does not have the usual bias of Western travellers; but what you tell me about this volume makes me fear that it is not worth the others...

I have Stinilberg Oberlin's "Japanese Buddhist Sects"; it is indeed an impartial work, which is already a merit in such a case.

I no longer remember if Mario Meunier had spoken to me of the "Homeric Allegories" of Heraclides; I thank you for your proposal concerning the text, but I must admit that I am quite like you in this respect: I have very much forgotten the Greek, having hardly ever had the opportunity to deal with it.

For the story of the "Talking mongoose", I did not want to say that, assuming the truth, it is a real mongoose, especially since it is not very clear how it would have come there, but it may be that it is a form taken by a kind of "coagulation" of an errant influence, without there being any need for an operation by the young girl or another nobody since it sometimes happens that such things happen in completely uninhabited places; what is curious is that in our time, the spiritist theory of the necessity of "mediums" seems to have caused us to lose sight of the existence of spontaneous manifestations.

It seems that the book on the great pyramid had an extraordinary success and is sold by the thousands thanks to a propaganda too skilfully organized not to be suspect; there are in these so-called "prophecies" quite absurd things; you will see what I say about it in my reviews (probably in November)...

I had already heard of K. Mansfield and his stay with Gourdjieff, which some even say brought forward his death; I knew people who were in contact with this Gourdjieff, of whom it was never possible to know exactly whether he was Russian or Bulgarian, in any case, it seems that he was not only a charlatan, but a rather sinister character; I don't know what all of this has become or if anything of this organization still remains.

I'm glad you could finally have the "Modern World Crisis"; for the difficulty that you point out to me, it is quite simply due to this: the development of a cycle, considered in relation to the evolutionary helix, takes place only in a horizontal plane; but, considered in itself and separately from the whole, it takes place in a descending direction; there are two points of view which must not be confused.

For the "protocols", the mystification is that the pseudo-document was fabricated by the Russian police and attributed to a Zionist organization, which is all the more "exoteric" and devoid of "secrets". any. That the "spirit" corresponds, however, to something which really exists, is a

any other matter; this is moreover what is most astonishing, given that most of the said document was purely and simply copied from an old pamphlet directed against Napoleon III!

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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(Z4)

Cairo, November 17, 1936.

Sir, I have

received both your letter and the envelope containing the various denominations announced, and I thank you for that. I am happy with what you tell me about the "Modern World Crisis"; did I tell you that an Italian translation of this book will appear shortly?

Thériet's article is not bad indeed this time; it is not besides the intelligence which misses to him, but there is at home a will to remain "superficial". As for Ramon Fernandez, of whom he speaks, I am surprised at his "evolutions" when I remember having known him as a friend and disciple of Augustin Cochin!

The passage from Proust is really curious, indeed, but it still shows that it is not enough to "feel" certain things when knowledge is lacking, which cannot be invented or improvised...

The "silver cord" is a symbolic expression like the "solar ray"; it is understood that some may have "visions" which take this form, or which they translate into these terms; but the wrong thing is to take them literally and so to speak "materially", and that's when things become incomprehensible

I read the "White Monk of Timbuktu" (it reads very quickly anyway); your assessment was correct, and it is surely inferior to other Seabrook books. There must be something more than what he says; the allusions to various initiations, which you have moreover marked, tend to indicate this... But then there is a kind of contradiction with the role of French political agent played by the character, unless, in acting thus, his true intention was not to limit in some way the damage of "civilization". His marriage is also another enigma, because, contrary to what is asserted, it cannot be regular either from the Muslim point of view or from the Catholic point of view...

I have seen, not the volume "India, magic", but the articles in the form of which it first appeared; it is certainly not "transcendent"; some animal stories are still the best part of it. As for "In Pursuit of Wisdom", which, if I understand correctly, has also just appeared, I wonder if Magre will send it to me as he has done for several other books; so I'll get back to you about that in a while. It is not that Aurobindo Ghose is so westernized, but it is his entourage, mostly French, who is terrible, "arranging" what is published under his name, preventing people who do not like him from approaching him. not to the "disciples", etc.. I never really explained this strange situation to myself...

I'm a little surprised by the article in "La Croix" on Otto Rahu's book, especially so long after it was published; there is a lot of fantasy in this book, and

it is not entirely the fault of the author, who fell rather badly in his "investigations". As for the so-called Iranian "Parzieval-namah", no one has ever seen him; its existence has only been supposed by an Austrian writer whose name escapes me.

I read H. Hesse's "Siddharta" a few years ago, when it was published in a magazine (I believe it was in "Europe"), and the impression that I have guarded agrees well with what you say about it. So, for the moment, I accept your offer to send me "L'Ombre de Makoui" which I don't know, and the volume of tales by V. de l'Isle-Adam; thanks in advance.

Believe, I beg you, sir, in my best feelings.

RG

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***René Guénon to the Reverend Father Victor Poucel***

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*Cairo, July 14, 1946*

My Reverend Father,

I have just received your letter, and I am happy to know that you have received my last books, or at least three of them; maybe you also now have the fourth one.

I saw the perfectly comprehensible account of the "Reign of Quantity" which appeared in the "Studies" from which I also learned the current tendency to accommodate all modern "scientist" and "evolutionary" ideas, which I find it truly deplorable. I even learned that you yourself weren't treated with much more understanding; I therefore understand only too well that you hardly counted on us accepting the notes you sent...

In recent times, people have spoken to me about you from various quarters, and I have been told that you have brought out several more volumes (I only knew the first two) but I did not know that your work had found stunted by disease; I want to hope, however, that it will only be momentary, and I hope that you will soon complete your recovery. Who knows if you'll come here... and if we can meet one day?

I was very saddened by what you told me about our poor friend Ch. Grolbeau, because I was still unaware of his death. To tell the truth, I was worried about not knowing anything about him since the resumption of communications, and I didn't know anyone from whom I could find out about it; I wondered if his health, already so fragile for a long time, could have resisted the events; but what exactly happened?

I understand your point of view very well, and I admire that you have arrived on your own at conceptions which contrast so happily with the "diminished" idea of Christianity that most of our contemporaries have. — On the other hand, I also understand that there are certain things in my own point of view which may surprise those who are not accustomed to them, although I try to explain them as clearly as possible. (Perhaps too clearly for some.)

It must be clearly understood that the esoteric and initiatic point of view (which we must be careful not to confuse with modern counterfeits), to which properly refers the consciousness of the essential unity of all the traditions under the apparent diversity of external forms, is quite distinct from the exoteric and religious point of view, which is not within my province. Another point on which we must avoid any ambiguity is that everything which really deserves the name of "Tradition" (and this is always how I understand it) is properly "supra-human" and that, by Consequently, the "human initiatives" to which you allude cannot have the slightest part. -- In fact, I simply expose certain truths for those wherever they come from, who can understand them more or less completely, and my role must be limited to that; it is up to everyone to draw conclusions from it in accordance with their own tendencies, because the same path cannot suit everyone indiscriminately (and this is moreover why the diversity of forms is necessary). Only (and I especially call your attention here

above) as I have written somewhere, one can be above the particular traditional forms (by the effective consciousness of its unity) or below them, and the "religious indifference" of which you speak is situated unquestionably below; those who would lean on this side would therefore simply prove that they did not understand anything....

Please accept, my Reverend Father, the expression of my very respectful feelings.

Rene Guenon

.....

September 28, 1946

My Reverend Father,

I have received your letter informing me of your coming here, and I would have liked it to be possible for me to see you these days; but unfortunately, I find myself quite ill for some time, which is all the more unfortunate for me from all points of view as I am always overloaded with work and really have little time to be ill .

I therefore see myself forced to ask you to wait a little, and when I find myself better, I will write to you again to try to arrange a meeting.

I hope you will excuse this involuntary setback, and I pray, my Reverend Father, to believe in my best and most respectful feelings.

*Rene Guenon*

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***Correspondence exchanged between René Guénon and André Bastien (1)***  
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Paris, June 21, 1948

Revered Master,

It was with great joy that I learned from my friend Maridort that you were willing to accept me as one of your correspondents; I greatly appreciate this welcome, for I suspect how much time the correspondence must cost you, time certainly more useful for other tasks of greater interest.

I became acquainted with your work in 1936 and the first work which I read was "The esotericism of Dante", work followed soon after by all the others, including the "King of the world" only, finding not, I was obliged to copy from the copy of one of your friends: M. Gallo. For many years I have subscribed to "Traditional Studies", of which I have the complete collection.

I belong to the "Great Triad", which I joined as soon as I learned of its program. I have known Patrice Genty for a long time, who introduced me to Clavelle.

I am still only at the beginning of the Path which leads to the Light, and perhaps even this path is not my path, because I still feel so far from a simple beginning of beginning of realization, and my being is still too scattered. I persist nevertheless, knowing well that it is only the effort which strives the possibilities which one carries in oneself. I would be very happy if this correspondence brought me advice to avoid some of the pitfalls that any beginner inevitably encounters.

Maridort tells me that you want to know who Georges Lagrèze was, whom I knew before the war. It is quite difficult to form a fair opinion about an individual, and especially to know the degree of sincerity he shows. Lagrèze always seemed to me distorted by the theater, because he was manager of the Strasbourg theater and played small roles in tours. He had, without a doubt, a taste for titles and parchments, like many obscure characters who suffer from an inferiority complex. His esoteric pseudonym was MIKAEL. He was part of Martinism around 1907 I believe and was appointed inspector for Egypt where he was to go on a theatrical tour. It was there that he met Sémélas and Dupré. I remember a photo which represented the three of them occupied with excavations which gave rise to relics coming from a commandery of the Temple (it was Dupré who held them, I am only telling what Lagrèze told me said because I did not have the opportunity to see them), there was also, it seems, a magic dagger which disappeared during the bombardment of Dupré's house in Épernon. It is even the only thing that would have disappeared while this house housed the very valuable collections of his son-in-law Roland Dorgelès, the famous writer.

He was also a friend of Mallinger and Doctor Crampon, because he was Beneficial Knight of the Holy City (last degree of the rectified rite to which he belonged). He also said that he had received the consecration of the "universal priesthood", he was 96° from

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1 — From photocopies of the manuscript

Memphis-Misraïm, 33° REAA, member of more or less ephemeral orders such as those of the Unknown Samaritans , of Hermes Tetramegistus, and so many others.

He had shown me, during a visit, the box full of diplomas, charters, decorations and insignia that he had. He had been consecrated Gnostic Bishop by the coadjutor of Genty and subsequently consecrated several bishops including I believe Ambelain and Amadou, perhaps others, but I do not have the possibility of finding out.

What has always surprised me the most is to see that he had received so many initiations when his strongly divergent gaze seemed to deprive him of any initiatic qualification.

He had the archives of Téder (or at least part of it) and it was through him that Ambelain came into possession of papers concerning your removal from the Humanitad lodge, which he spoke about during his last conference, to which I attended with Maridort, but he was careful not to print anything on the subject in his brochure which reproduces the text of his lecture.

Lagrèze was linked with Meslin, Chaboseau father and son, Ambelain, and had insisted a lot before the war on having Augustin Chaboseau named president of AMORC, which was to enable him to be his assistant delegate or his more or less general inspector. .

He died in 1945 I believe and I believe that his archives are in the hands d'Ambelain, or at least that the latter has a copy

I hope this information will allow you to form an opinion of the character. On different occasions I had the opportunity to talk to him about metaphysical questions and I realized that these subjects did not interest him much and that his knowledge was not very deep.

On the subject of the "Brothers of the Orient", about which Maridort asks me to write to you what I know, I can only repeat to you what Dupré said about them. It would be from them that Martinès Pasqually would have received his initiation (?). Their seal was the Chrism of Labarum. I believe that Sémélas had to forge this legend to give more weight to the notebooks written by him for the Martinist Order of Dupré was killed during an aerial bombardment towards the Papus. end of the war.

It should  request confirmation of this fact from the town hall of Épernon, where he had been living since the war. I also knew that he was the successor of Sémélas at the head of the company of the Lys and the eagle (his wife was DEA and Sémélas DEON, both represented the divine intermediaries placed at the head of this order). Dupré appeared to be in good faith in his assertions.

All his information, although fragmentary, will hardly give you the details you were hoping for. Ask me about the details, if I can bring you other materials, I will do it with pleasure.

While waiting for the pleasure of reading you, I beg you to accept Revered Master, the expression of my most respectful and fraternal feelings

A. Bastien

90 rue de la Jonquière  
Paris 17°

Cairo, July 10, 1948

TÿCÿFÿ ,

Thank you for your letter received a few days ago; it is true that I have a rather overloaded correspondence, as you think, but it is also important, since, at the distance where I am, it is the only way for me to take care of many things. ...

I had no idea you knew Gallo; many years ago I never heard of him; what has become of him?

I naturally learned at the time of your affiliation to the GT, which I had foreseen, moreover, according to what our friend Genty had told me previously, who often spoke to me about you. I hope that you are completely satisfied with it; the GT is of course still in its infancy, but it promises to give very interesting results.

I met Lagrèze nearly forty years ago (he was already an actor at that time), but I've never seen him since, and I only have a very vague impression of him. So I was somewhat surprised when I learned of the role he had played in various circumstances, and first in the constitution of the famous FUDOSJ. It seems that at that time he was more or less associated with Victor Blanchard, but that they had to fall out afterwards; but it was not long since I found out that he was connected with the Chaboseaus. As for the incredible story of the "Frères d'Orient", it was through Genty that I first heard about it, about ten years ago; I always thought it was just a hoax from Semeleas, who seems to me to have been very capable of setting this thing up from scratch. Moreover, there most certainly never existed a Commandery of the Temple in Egypt; as for the objects discovered in an excavation, they could very well have been placed there on purpose, and I have heard of other stories of the same kind that have happened here... I also believe, like you, that Dupré was in good faith in this and that he was only the dupe of Semelas; as for Lagrèze, I don't know at all what it could be, but his taste for titles and diplomas could very well dispose him to also believe everything that was told to him, as soon as it could result from it. for him some satisfactions of this kind. - About Dupré, according to what Maridort tells me in his last letter (more recent than yours by a few days), I believe to understand that you would have finally had confirmation of his death; the thing interested me from a completely different point of view: we thought, Genty and I, that he perhaps had the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi, and we would have liked to know what had become of them...

One thing that surprises me is that Lagrèze had Téder's papers, because I would rather have believed that they were in the possession of the people of Lyons; There's something there that I can't quite explain. This would also confirm the statements of Gloton, according to whom the said papers were in the hands of Jules Boucher; it is indeed very possible that Ambelain, if he received them from Lagrèze, communicated them to him. Humanity; it's understandable that he deleted that in his

brochure, if only because of the foreword in which he quotes me at such length! What is astonishing is that this brochure constitutes a true denial of his previous book on Martinism both with regard to the "Brothers of the East" and on various other points. I wonder where exactly this is coming from; there are confusions which do not seem entirely involuntary to me, in particular between the ranks of the Elected Coëns and , those of the rectified regime; but to what extent is Ambelain really mandated by the latter? In any case, the Rectified Regime is really unlucky because it attracts many more or less suspicious people; a little before the war, there had been talk of setting up a Grand Priory in Belgium, but the thing was not followed up, and I must say that I had something to do with it, having known what were worth the elements to which it was proposed to call!

A point on which I would have been curious to have some details is this: according to what Ambelain recounts in his book, Lagrèze, during the war, claimed to have taken the place of his own authority for the Supy Consy of the Scottish Rite, on the pretext that it was then dormant, and he would have thus conferred the thirty-third degree on a certain Fy Aurifer; do you know who this character is, who played one of the main roles in the alleged reconstitution of the Elus Coëns, and would it not be Ambelain himself, although he recognizes moreover that this transmission of the thirty-third degree in these conditions were irregular? I don't really see who else it could be, especially since it says that "Mikael and Aurifer were both possessors of the Cathar episcopate according to the filiation of J. Doinel".

Could you also tell me a bit about Amadou, about which I don't know much? Genty told me about his pamphlet on Saint Martin, which I haven't seen, and Clavelle only told me that he was a rather uninteresting young man; he would currently be in America.

Coming back to Semelas, it seems that the "Order of the Lys and the Eagle" must have continued after his death, because I saw, in the last years before the war, numbers of a sort of newspaper entitled "Justice and Truth" (if I remember correctly, because I am unable to find them now), where it was not directly mentioned, but on the title of which spread out, very recognizable, the insignia of the Order in question; are you aware of this?

Thanks in advance for anything you can tell me about these stories instead. confused, and believe, I beg you, TCF, in my very fraternal sentiments.

RG

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Paris, September 18, 1948

Revered Master

I found your letter when I got back from vacation and I thank you for having answered mine at such length. I will try to give you the information

you ask me, regretting not being better documented Gallo is

still a draughtsman and deals with his wife with microscopic preparations and histological drawings that he sells to microscope dealers. This job allows him to live very simply. I see him once or twice a month and let him know of your desire to hear from him. He often thinks of you and remembers the times when you shared the bread and peaches that were your meal. He stayed away from more or less spiritualist movements and is content to receive a few friends from time to time. He continues to study extreme Eastern and Hindu philosophies without abandoning the "Divine Comedy" that he reads in the text. He asks me to send you his fondest memories and to tell you that he always takes a very keen interest in reading your works and your articles.

What you learned about the Brothers of the Orient through the Genty channel came from the Chabouseaus who had it from Dupré and who had told him this fable most certainly from Sémélas. I'm going to try to find out if Dupré's wife still has her husband's papers and Abdul-Hâdi's manuscripts. I will take advantage of a day off to push on as far as Épernon, but I will already try to find out if Madame Dupré is still at Épernon by writing to her.

The papers (or at least part of the papers) of Téder were in the hands of Lagrèze who entrusted them or transmitted them to Ambelain with whom he was very close. The latter, being a friend of JB, will no doubt have communicated them to him. Aurifer is the pseudonym of Ambelain and Lagrèze transmitted to him the thirty-third degree of the REAA of his own volition whereas if the SC was officially dissolved, its members were to meet on occasion without any doubt, since most of the workshops had maintained contact between their members. Ambelain also recognizes in his brochure the invalidity of this elevation.

I only know of Amadou his little book and I only know that he is in America where he published a little review, very badly composed in French, which is called "Les Cahiers de l'Homme-Esprit" and which claims to be the organ of the Friends of Saint Martin group.

The review "Justice and Truth" was indeed the continuation of D'EON, the review of Semélas; I also saw numbers of it before the war and it was printed in polycopy or a similar process (the text was drawn by hand, calligraphed by Dupré who was a draftsman by trade). In 1939 the "Lys and the Eagle" still existed but reduced to a few members who met at one or the other, they had begun publishing Molitor's work using the same typographic process as their journal; I had the first notebook in my hands and cannot find it. I also saw at that time a mimeographed notebook on the tarot which is quoted by Chaboseau in his book also dealing with this subject. If I remember correctly, the key to the interpretation of the mysteries would have been the graphic diagram of the chrism of the famous "Brothers of the East".

I believe that Dupré had a son-in-law who also dealt with the same questions and who had to continue the "Ordre du Lys et de l'Aigle". It seems to me that he was a teacher. Either way, I'll try to find out what's left.

I had the opportunity to see Patrice Genty again during the holidays because I

stopped at Auray and took a detour to Quibron. He is in excellent health and knew from you that we were in correspondence.

Your letter reached me opened by the Egyptian censorship, the side of the envelope had been cut and a sticky strip with Arabic characters was stuck on the opening. Do you receive your letters also checked?

I'm currently reading articles by Grasse d'Orcet in the "Revue Britannique", I think you know them, they appeared between 1888 and 1900. His explanations seem very ingenious, but what should we remember? Does his explanation of texts or sculptures by the phonetic method in the genre of rebus rest on serious bases? I would like to know your opinion on this point.

I thank you in advance, and while waiting to have the pleasure of reading you, please accept, Revered Master, the expression of my most respectful and fraternal sentiments.

A.Bastien

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Cairo, October 11, 1948

TyCÿFÿ,

I have just received your letter of September 18; this can currently be considered a normal delay, as many are more than a month on the way. The letters addressed to me always reach me intact; as for those which are dispatched from here, what you point out to me has already happened also for some others; but besides, as long as it is neither a question of politics nor commercial affairs, there is no reason to worry about it.

Since you often see Gallo, you will be very kind to thank him for me for his good memories and to transmit mine also to him, as well as to his wife. I had no idea what they could do now; do they still live in rue Bonaparte? He surely did well to keep always aloof from the various occultist circles; on the other hand, I don't believe that he ever resumed maç activity since the already very distant time when he was in Bologna.

Genty had also told me, in his last letter, that he had seen you during the holidays. he says that story came from the Chaboseaus, but I don't remember. On the other hand, I remember very well that, among other implausibilities, it was claimed that Martinism at first comprised only one degree, and that the two others had been added only following a trip by Lagrèze to Egypt, while the three degrees have existed in reality since its constitution by Papus; I don't understand how A. Chaboseau, who surely knew what to think about it, could have contributed to spreading such a fable. There is, moreover, a proof of the falsity of this assertion whose verification is within everyone's reach: it is the publication of the notebooks of the three degrees in Jean Kostka's "Lucifer unmasked"; this is long before the

theatrical tour of Lagrèze, of which I do not know the exact date, but which certainly took place only after 1900.

I did not know that Madame Dupré was still alive; it would be interesting to know if there are any manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi, because so far, despite all our searches on various sides, it has not been possible to find any of them.-- You told me previously said that Roland Dorgelès was Dupré's son-in-law; but I suppose that the one you are talking about this time and who would have continued the Order of the Lys and the Eagle must be another.-- I see that I was not mistaken for the review "justice and truth"; there was no express mention of the Lys and the Eagle, but there was a drawing on the title that I had recognized. It seems to me that the address of this magazine was at Pré Saint Gervais, at a name which was completely unknown to me, and which is perhaps that of this son-in-law of Dupré.-- In the bibliography of the "Tarot" of A Chaboseau, I find the mention of a "Tarot" under the name of Dupré which is perhaps this notebook of which you speak, and also that of another "Tarot" of Sémélas indicated as "hors commerce" and whose I wonder if it would not rather be this one that it is.

The irregularity of Ambelain's 33° degree is obvious, and I had noticed that he recognized it himself. On the other hand, as he seems to pose as more or less mandated by the Rectified Scottish Diet, I would be quite interested to know what exactly his position is in this one; do you have any details on that?

Genty and Faugeron once spoke to me about Grasset d'Orcet's articles, but I never had the opportunity to read them; it does seem, from what they told me, that there are some very curious things in there, but which one cannot perhaps accept entirely without reservations, all the more so since, at the point From a historical point of view, this is obviously very difficult to verify. As for the kind of interpretation of which you speak, it is not purely fanciful as it might give the impression, but it is all the more serious, because it most certainly relates to one of those deviated initiations to which I have alluded to several times. We also find things of the same origin in a certain number of other more or less recent writings, starting with the "Rômes" of Vaillant (the role of the Bohemians in the transmission of these things is moreover to be particularly noted), and especially in the works of the so-called Fulcanelli. I also remember, among other things (and I'm thinking about it at the moment because you're talking about sculptures), a bizarre book entitled "L'Art sacerdotal antique", by a certain Antoine Monnier. Ambelain himself inherited something from this, although probably in an indirect way, and I pointed this out in connection with his book on cathedrals; and even poor Paul le Court, who surely is completely unaware of the nature of what is involved, is not entirely exempt from this influence, because of his relations with the late Dujols (from whom in reality everything which was published under the name of Fulcanelli).--In this connection, I need hardly tell you that the so-called Brethren of Heliopolis are just as imaginary as the Brethren of the Orient (but perhaps this other invention serves to hide something more real); what is really curious is the ease with which one likes to situate all sorts of non-existent things in Egypt!

Very frat.. yours

Rene Guenon

PS: I think you must have seen JB's book; it is not without interest, but there are some fantasies on certain points, and above all too much "magic"...

.....

Paris December 15, 1948.

Revered Master,

I have just noticed while replying to a letter from Genty, that I had completely omitted to reply to your last letter of October 11, please forgive me, having a lot of work at the approach of the holidays .

I have passed on your fond memories to Gallo, who lives at 34 rue du dragon, since 1939. He has never resumed maç. activity since his arrival in France.

I indeed met Genty during my vacation and about what he told you, it is perfectly correct that A. Chaboseau spread the rumor that it was following the writing of the notebooks by Sémélas that Martinism comprised three degrees. A Chaboseau said that the transmission he had received only included the two letters and the six dots, which is rather poor. I was able to check in Kostka's book, which I have, the merits of your rectification.

For lack of time, I still haven't been to Epernon to find out if Dupré's widow had the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi. Dupré's son-in-law who was in charge of Le Lys et de l'Aigle and the publication of the newspaper "Justice et Vérité" was called Marcel Camus and lived before the war at Pré Saint Gervais, probably at the address of the newspaper, which I searched in vain in my belongings without being able to find it.

In the bibliography of the tarot of Chaboseau it is question of the tarot of Sémélas, mimeographed edition and not put on the market and of the tarot of Dupré, continuation of articles published in the review EON. The two books are different.

I have to meet Ambelain one day soon, and I will see him in the company of Maridort, and we will question him on his present situation in the Rectified Scottish Regime; I believe that Lagrèze had conferred on him the title of Chevalier Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte (CBCS) from what I remember from interviews dating back to 1943.

You tell me that everything that has been published under the name of Fulcanelli comes from Dujols, I think I know from what J.Boucher told me that Fulcanelli was really Champagne, the illustrator of Fulcanelli's books. This Champagne was Boucher's master and dedicated his books to him by signing them Champagne (I saw them) and Boucher has a photo of the tomb of the said Champagne buried near Paris (my memory does not remember all the details that JB had given me, but I think I'll ask him again during a meeting). In this regard, JB had intended to explain everything: the origin of the pseudo Champagne and the creation of the so-called Brothers of Heliopolis, when a book by Canceliet on the Logis appeared

Alchemicals. Canceliet tried to pass himself off as Fucanelli by taking advantage of the darkness that shrouded the real author of the two books (Mysteries of the Cathedrals and Demeures Philosophales). Since Boucher has given up all alchemical speculation, he is currently devoting himself more particularly to Masonic symbolism. He is currently publishing, in the form of a fictional serial, in the review Destins, a kind of auto-biography entitled "The misadventures of Hugues Colbert, etc..." He became interested in alchemy while He was a chemist at Poulenc and frequented Doctor Rouhier who also worked there.

For lack of time many current facts are unnoticed by me, and I do not have the opportunity to know in detail all the groups that continue to gravitate in the shadows.

I take advantage of this letter to ask you to accept my best wishes for Christmas and New Year, with the usual delay, you will probably receive them when necessary.

While waiting for the pleasure of reading you, I beg you to accept, Revered Master, the expression of my most respectful and fraternal sentiments.

A.Bastien

.....

Cairo, January 12, 1949.

TÿCÿFÿ,

I have just received your letter of December 15; you can certainly be forgiven for not having answered me sooner... Thank you for having carried out my commission to Gallo.

As for the question of the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi, there is naturally nothing in a hurry, and I know only too well that we don't always manage to find enough time for everything!

Curiously, I'm no more successful than you in finding the numbers of "Justice and Truth" which I surely have somewhere; I remember that the address was at the Pré Saint Gervais, but I no longer know at all what the name of the director or the manager was and if it was that of the son-in-law of Dupré of whom you speak.

For Martinism, the transmission of A. Chabouseau was independent of that of Papus, but, if my memories are correct, the latter also had received nothing more than what Chabouseau said. As for the notebooks of the three grades, they were surely written by Papus himself from the beginning of his organization; yet another proof that the three grades really existed then is the speech of initiation to the grade of S.. ·J.. by Stanislas de Guaïta, which appeared in the "Initiation" almost at the beginning and was reproduced, with various other articles, in the collection entitled "La Science Secrète", published in 1890; the title, as I have just checked, expressly bears the mention: "Keeping of the 3rd degree"! Following the publication of Kostka's book, Papus claimed to have made certain modifications to the notebooks

(he wrote it, I believe, in his pamphlet entitled "The Devil and the Occult", which I cannot find at the moment), but in reality nothing has ever changed at all, because all the autographed specimens which I have, and which are those which were in use after 1900, are exactly identical to what is in "Lucifer unmasked".

As Maridort, in his last letters which are more recent than yours, does not speak to me of Ambelain, I think that doubtless you have not yet met him as you intended; I am curious to know if you will be able to clarify this question of its situation in the Rectified Regime. It definitely seems that Lagrèze got involved in everything; I wonder if he could be more qualified to regularly confer the rank of CBCS than for the 33° Scottish...

It is probable that the name of Fucanelli will have been invented by Champagne, as well as the story of the so-called "Brothers of Heliopolis"; but that does not appear to me to be in contradiction with the fact that the books which he published under this signature would have been entirely written with the documentation of Dujols; Faugeron, who frequented the latter a lot, was very affirmative on this and shared Madame Dujols' indignation with regard to this process.-- I never had much information on this Canseliet who intervened later in that case ; I think I was told he lived in Bordeaux, and he must be or have been in touch with Paul le Court, because the latter once published something by him in Atlantis.

When I met Rouhier, he was indeed working at Poulenc, but I had no idea that J. Boucher had also worked there. In his "Masonic Symbolism", he has already announced his intention to publish another book on the symbolism of the High Grades.-- About JB, do you know anything about the group of "Kad" (he collaborated on his review), in which a split has recently occurred? It seems, from what Marius Lepage told me, that the defunct "Traditional Martinism" still exerted a rather annoying influence on this side!

Thank you for your good wishes; in my turn, I am also sending you all mine for this new year, only regretting that they cannot reach you until a little late.

Very frat.. over to you.

Rene Guenon

.....

March 4, 1949.

Revered Master

I was hoping to be able to give you more information about the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi, but I haven't been able to go to Épernon yet. Nevertheless, I learned that all of Dupré's papers were in the possession of his son-in-law. Having found the N° of "Justice and Truth", I noted two addresses, that of the newspaper: 97 rue Campans in Paris 19° and that of M.Gaston Pascal 8 rue des écoles at Pré Saint Gervais. I hope that at

these addresses I will have information.

Totally agree with you about the rituals cited in "Lucifer Unmasked", but there were mimeographed notebooks circulating which were the work of Semelas. These instructions developed the texts of Papus. If I can find the text I will send it to you.

I met Ambelain who stopped all construction work following incidents that he related to me. The Saint Andrew of Egypt lodge, which was created during the occupation, followed a ritual of the rectified rite; at the liberation this lodge was to be , but integrated into the G.. L.. dissensions arose and it was put to sleep, its members being divided into various workshops. It was during the closing session that incidents occurred: Ambelain was reproached for his conduct at the liberation of Paris where he allegedly wanted to plunder notorious anti-masons (at least that is the version provided by Ambelain). Following this shelving he lost interest in the question and if in the brochure devoted to Martinism he makes allusions, it is only out of boastfulness vis-à-vis those who reproached his conduct. Incidentally he told me about the works of Equinox which were attempted, with success, by a group controlled by Ambelain, during the years 42 to 44. According to the Martinesist rituals, he would have personally had the vision of the Angel of the Earth . He has to show me on occasion the minutes of the evocation sessions that he recorded on a day-to-day basis.

The grades of 33° and CBCS were given to it by Lagrèze, in communication, and, without the slightest value. He does not, however, claim their validity.

I don't know Cancelier's address, but I think he lives retired in the Paris suburbs. I can find out from time to time if you are interested.

Learned nothing about KAD. I hope to be able to give you details later.

I had the opportunity to leaf through the notice sent to booksellers to announce the publication of a book by Philippe Encausse on Papus. It is his old text that he developed since the book must have more than 500 pages. In the table of contents I draw your attention to the following heading:

The Martinist order.- Initiation of Papus into Martinism.- The first Parisian lodges.- Téder, Jean Bricaud, Chevillon.- The exclusion of René Guénon.- Lyonnais Martinism. etc...

The book is in subscription and will be published soon... It is the editions OCIA 3 rue Cardinal Mercier Paris IX° which launch the prospectus.

I apologize for having answered you so late, I was hoping to be able to provide you with information on Dupré and that is the reason for this delay.

While waiting for the pleasure of reading you, please accept, Revered Master, the expression of my deepest feelings. ..

A.Bastien

Cairo, March 31, 1949

TÿCÿFÿ,

The day before yesterday I received your letter of March 4; I don't need to tell you that your delay in writing to me is fully excused. I learned last week from Maridort what you tell me about the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi; it is to be hoped that you will be able to succeed in communicating it and if there are really interesting things in it, in taking a copy; it will be the first time, despite all the searches made so far from various sides, that we have been able to find something of it! -- I would be curious, from another point of view, to see the notebooks of Sémélas if you can find them; it is quite certain in any case that they are much later than those of Papus, and I still do not understand how some could dispute such an obvious thing...

As regards Ambelain, I knew nothing of the incidents of which you speak, and, according to his pamphlet on Martinism, I was far from suspecting that he had ceased all maçÿ activity; under these conditions, his insinuations tending to make people think that he plays an important role in the Rectified Rite are really very unserious; but at least he is happy that he has no illusions about the validity of the ranks that Lagrèze had conferred on him on his own authority! From the point of view of the Rectified Rite, the L.. Saint Andrée of Egypt must have been irregular, because, as I wrote recently to F.. Mercier on another subject (it was about the current possession of this Rite by the G.. O.. ), the condition of regularity is the recognition by the Grand Priory of Helvetia, the latter being, as a successor of the former Helvetic French-speaking Directory, the only Obedience of the said Rite which has existed continuously since the beginning.

I thought I had heard that Canseliet lived in Bordeaux, but it is true that he may well have changed residence since then; I would not be sorry to have some information on this character, but it is understood that you should not be disturbed on purpose for that.-- For the minutes of the evocation sessions that Ambelain must show you, there is also only to wait for him to keep his promise, because of course there is nothing urgent about it.

Thank you for telling me about the new book by Ph. Encasse; it will be good to see that when it appears... This new edition of the same story leads me to wonder if he would not be in more or less close relations with Boucher, Amblain, etc. ; do you know what it is?

Regarding the "Kad" group, it would seem, from what Marius Lepage told me, that Chaboseau's "Traditional" Martinism still exerted a rather unfortunate influence on this side. There are now two separate groups, the "Friends of Druidism" and the "Friends of the Celtic Tradition"; I suppose that the former persist in their artificial and more or less fanciful ideas of ritual reconstitution, while the latter had the good sense to renounce them entirely.

Very frat.. yours

Rene Guenon

June 19, 1949

Revered Master,

Always late to answer, please excuse me again this time; since May my wife has been ill and the operation has only been avoided, if it is avoided, by a small amount.

I saw Madame Dupré twice and she assured me that her husband had never had the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi in his possession. She didn't destroy anything from her husband's archives and her research done at my request didn't turn up anything new. The Lys et de l'Aigle group continues with about twenty members, in the Paris region. They do not proselytize and their group only includes loyal members from before the war and having known Dupré.

Eugène Dupré was killed in Épernon on June 12, 1944, following the outbreak of bombs that a plane got rid of before falling on the ground.

I have had access to Ambelain's minutes in which he recounts his experiences of "equinox work" according to the methods of Martinès, and which took place from September 1942 to June 1944. He ceased his evocations at the following advice given by Doctor Rouhier, and after having obtained the physical manifestation of what he believes to be the angel Ariel. He animated a luminous apparition of gems and the altar lamp flickered like a breath, while he had the very distinct sensation of a super-human presence. These experiments were done in the presence of his wife and their daughter. He was followed in his experiments by a dozen of his friends who did not obtain convincing results. Since that date, he has renounced all evocation, in a kind of "sacred terror".

Doctor Encausse's book has still not appeared. Presumably, he must have got his information from the Boucher-Ambelain canal, but no doubt he knew and frequented Lagrèze who, at the origin of this campaign, possessed Téder's papers and exhibited them at all times.

I haven't learned anything about Kad, the Friends of Druidism and the Friends of the Celtic Tradition, maybe through Genty's channel you can find out more.

Lately, due to my wife's illness, I haven't had much time and opportunity to meet friends I could ask about her more or less fanciful groupings. The former disciples of Ivanof must have continued on their side to meet or to form dissident groups, but there too, for lack of time, I learned nothing new. In the "modern" press there appear from time to time articles on all the "Magi" who continue to wreak havoc among all those attracted by the marvellous. Counter-initiation is not idle these days.

Henri Meslin died on March 9 as a result of generalized edema and Chaboseau took his place as director and manager of the Lotus Bleu.

Always at your disposal, and apologizing for the delay in my response, I  
Please accept, Revered Master, the expression of my most fraternal sentiments..

bastien

Cairo, July 25, 1949.

TyCyFy,

I have only just received your letter of June 19, and I am very sorry to learn of the anxiety that Madame Bastien's health caused you and still causes you; I want to believe that an operation can definitely be avoided, and I send you all my best wishes for his recovery. -this ; I do not need to tell you that your delay in writing to me is fully excused!

Since Madame Dupré found nothing in her husband's papers despite her new searches, here again, regarding the manuscripts of Abdul-Hâdi, was a vanished hope, and it was in a way the last; It's really quite extraordinary that everything disappeared like this without leaving the slightest trace...

Maridort had given me a glimpse of the content of Ambelain's minutes; what seemed to me the most curious in there, are the series of "coincidences" which obviously were not wanted and which seem to show that there was something other than auto-suggestion; but, apart from that, I must say that I do not really see what experiences of this kind can lead to, nor above all what spiritual benefit one can hope to derive from them!

Ph. Encausse seems to take a long time to publish his book, unless this delay is due to his publisher, which would not be extraordinary in the current circumstances. What you suppose about the origin of his information is indeed very likely; I never knew if he was in touch with Lagrèze, but it's quite probable too, because I remember that formerly he had seemed to me very concerned to find all the people who had known his father.

It seems that "Kad" has ceased to appear, or at least I haven't heard of it anymore; it is true that this publication has always been very "intermittent". On the other hand, I continue to receive the bulletin of the Friends of the Celtic Tradition, "Ogam", which testifies to a real effort in the direction of the traditional ideas; what is only a little worrying is that I noticed, in one of the last numbers, the reappearance of J. Boucher... It seems, on the other hand, that he was attracted to the G.. L.. a rather unfortunate story; with a character as aggressive as his, there is nothing very surprising about that.

I had learned from Genty some time ago of Meslin's death; I didn't know who was replacing him at the "Lotus Bleu", but I suspected right away that it could hardly be anyone but Chaboseau.

Very frat.. over to you.

Rene Guenon

**René Guénon to René Burlet (1)**

.....

Cairo, 31 July 1949

[...]For your painting using the swastika, if you do not think you can exhibit it in public, this is certainly not a reason to want to destroy it, because then you only have to "reserve" it for yourself and for a few. - Neither of the two directions of rotation is beneficial or malefic in itself; everything depends on the traditional form that is considered, which is beneficial for one being harmful for the other and vice versa, in accordance with their own characteristics.

In the same traditional form, the meaning opposite to that which is considered beneficial is sometimes used, not for evil actions, but for what is related to unfortunate events, for example for funeral rites. It also happens that the difference in meaning serves as a distinctive sign of two traditions that circumstances have led to coexist in the same region, such as Lamaism and Bon in Tibet. The opposition swastika-sauvastika is pure fantasy from a linguistic point of view: the name swastika is the only one which applies indistinctly in both cases and sauvastika is only an adjective which is derived from it and which designates what relates to the swastika. As for the expressions "to the right" and "to the left", they are very equivocal and unsatisfactory; what must be considered in reality to avoid any error is whether a person performing the rotation would have his right or his left turned towards the center.

Believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in my best feelings.

Rene Guenon

.....

Cairo, 22 November 1950

Dear Sir, The

first issue of your magazine (2) reached me shortly after I wrote to you; I find that in short, on the whole, it is very good for a start, in particular your notes on the fresco, because, as I said to you, I think it is absolutely essential to insist on the "business" side, and also, of course, the articles by R.

Pouyaud, in whom I only always find a little too biased against the Gothic; on the other hand, the comparison between painting and music, from the rhythmic point of view, is really very curious. I immediately made a report, and you will see that I preferred to pass over in silence the few points which could have given rise to objections; in this, I mean above all the article by Dom Angerico Surchamp, which hardly satisfied me because it expresses a really very narrow view of symbolism; that there is reason to take theology into account, I do believe that everyone must agree on that, but that is not all, and that does not prevent putting as much emphasis on it. 'other things that go beyond this area,

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1 — *The Cahiers de l'Herne*, 1985.

2 — *On the Profession*.

as was constantly done in the Middle Ages; only, the exclusive exotericists do not see any of this [...].

Rene Guenon

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## **26 Letters from René Guénon to Louis Charbonneau-Lassay**

.....

Paris, November 24,  
1924 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir,

I would have liked to thank you immediately for your kind sendings, but the time failed me to do it; I hope you will excuse my delay.

Thank you also for your laudatory appreciation of my "Theosophism"; I like to believe that "Orient et Occident" will also interest you, although it is a work of quite a different kind.

There are some confusions in the conference of Mgr. Janssens: confusion between theosophical theories and Hindu doctrines (which gives the greatest pleasure to the theosophists, whose claims are thus taken seriously instead of being shown to be inane), between Brahmanism and Buddhism, etc. These mistakes, moreover, are due to Fr. Mainage, whose initiatives are not always the happiest, because he too often happens to talk about what he does not know enough about.

Your last article in "Regnabit" is very interesting, and I think that we could draw, from the facts that you point out there, a certain number of important consequences, especially since it is not only in Egypt we find similarities of this kind. The role attributed to the heart in Hindu doctrines is no less remarkable; I will give some indications on this in my next work.

On the other hand, there would also be research to be done on the side of the traditions of Central America and Mexico, in which ones? ? ? or Quetzalcohuatl? ? ? was called "heart of the earth" or "heart of the world".

I also thought of a possible connection between the hieroglyphic vase and the symbol of the Grail; there would be a lot to say about that.

If I weren't afraid of being indiscreet, I would allow myself a little question: is it with intention that you brought together, in the same sentence, Melchisedec and the three Magi of the Gospel? It's at least curious, because it corresponds to things I've had the opportunity to think about often lately.

Regarding the symbols of Christ which we have spoken of, you may remember that, for the horse, I had told you that I saw there an allusion to the white horse of the Apocalypse, to which you had objected that Christ must rather be represented by the rider; but I answered you that it could be both by the rider and by the horse itself. Since then, I have found confirmation of this view in a work by Cardinal Billot, which says exactly the same thing; I noted the passage: "Wherever a mounted figure appears in the Apocalypse, the mount and the figure together appear the same thing ... The white horse with its rider represents a single object, which is Jesus Christ the Victor" (The Parousia, p. 283, in note). I believe I told you that the symbol of the white horse also exists in India, and with precisely the same meaning.

I also thought of the symbol of the six-pointed star, which may very well, as you said, represent the union of the divine nature and the human nature in the person of Christ. The triangle would be human nature, "made in the image

of God", thus figured as the inverted reflection of the divine triangle. In the Middle Ages, the human ternary "spiritus, anima, corpus" was very often assimilated to the ternary of the alchemical principles "sulphur, mercurius, sal".

On the other hand, from the kabbalistic point of view, the double triangle is the figure of the number 6, which is the number of union and mediation; it is also the number of creation, and, as such, it still applies to the Word: in this last respect, the symbol is nothing other than the translation of the "per quem omnia facta sunt" of the Creed. - It is also remarkable that, in China, six lines arranged differently also represent the mediating principle, which unites in itself the two celestial natures and terrestrial.

Of course, these various interpretations are not mutually exclusive; there is always a multiplicity of meanings in the same symbol, and this is even one of the principal advantages of symbolism, which is much less strictly limited as a means of expression than ordinary language.

Where, then, exactly, in the Gospel, is this word: "I am the Door"? I couldn't find the reference. - A curious fact (and I am thinking of this precisely in connection with the door) is that a certain number of symbols are common to Christ and to the Blessed Virgin; this point seems to me worthy of attention.

There would be much to say about the acronym "Sol and Luna", which was in constant use in Hermetic symbolism; I do hope that we will have the opportunity to talk about all this again.

Do you ever pass through Paris during your travels? If you happen to come there some day, we would be very happy to have your visit.

M. de Frémond, to whom I had pointed out your article on the counterfeits of the Sacred Heart, wrote to me that it was he who had found in Bordeaux, in 1916, the insignia in the shape of a multicolored star; perhaps you knew it, but, as for me, I was unaware of this detail.

My wife recalls to your good memory, and I, dear sir, please receive the expression of my best feelings.

RG

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Paris, December 23,  
1924 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (Ive)

Dear Sir, I am

really confused to have taken so long to answer your letter. It is that I would have liked to be able to give you some indications about the sign of the monastery of the Carmelites, but until now, alas! I haven't found anything yet. I have never seen any sign that looks like this; I spoke about it to friends who could not decipher them either, but who are going to look on their side. It appears to be a monogram; but, even in this case, the arrangement is surely not arbitrary and must have had some symbolic reason. - Is this sign carved in stone? If so, it could be one of those "master marks" that one encounters fairly frequently on old buildings. I know very well that, most often, the main element is constituted by a variant of the Constantinian sign,

such as   there is one of this type in the chapel of the Château de Champigny sur-Vende), but there may also have been other types. I know that research has been done in England (?) on these corporate signs, but I have not found any precise information on this, and I do not know where it has been published. In any case, if I end up discovering something interesting on one side or the other, I will not fail to communicate them to you. - Do you have any details about this brother Guyot of whom you speak to us, and who included the swastika in his signature? This fact seems to me rather worthy of remark.

For the seal forming a heart, I think that there is neither doubt nor hesitation to have, and that one cannot see there anything other than a representation of the Sacred Heart, to add to all those that you have already discovered; we are in complete agreement on this point.

The same goes for Melchisedec and the Magi: in both cases there is in fact the union of the two sacerdotal and royal powers in the same personages; and I am even convinced that, by referring to certain Eastern traditions, it is possible to establish a much closer link between them. I thought that the comparison indicated in your article was not accidental; I was all the more struck by it as I met very few people who had the idea of such a rapprochement, quite natural however.

I do not believe that the six-pointed star and the double triangle can, properly speaking, be regarded as two really distinct symbols; rather, they are two different forms of the same symbol. In any case, the meanings that relate to the number 6 are certainly common to both forms. We could perhaps also see a certain connection between the first and the star of the Magi, which, moreover, would not distance us so much from the other meanings as it may seem at first sight.

For the multiplicity of meanings and applications of the same symbol, what you say about fish is very accurate; the same remark could be made for many others, in particular for the deer, which is also Christ and the faithful, and even more often the faithful, because of this word of Job (VII, 2) ((\*) ) : "Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum. - About the fish, you probably know that this symbol is very old, and that it is almost always related to an aspect of the Word. I do not want to speak only of the Chaldean Oannes and the Syrian Dagon (which have often been mentioned in the publications of Hiéron de Paray-le-Monial); in India also, the fish represents the first manifestation of Vishnu.

I recently learned that there is in the south porch of the church of Perros-Guirec, a representation of the Trinity in which the Son is represented in the form of a lion; Did you know ? I believe that the thing is rather rare; I hope to have a photograph of it, which I can communicate to you if you do not already have it.

I hope that you will soon have some opportunity to return to Paris; in this case, it would be enough for you to send us a short note to inform us of your visit, in order to be sure of meeting us; I go out very little.

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\* y Ps 42-2

My wife asks me to present her compliments to you, and I, dear sir,  
please accept the expression of my best feelings.

RG

.....  
Paris, February 25,  
1925. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir, We

were sorry to learn that you are still feeling the consequences of your unfortunate asphyxiation; we like to believe that you are now fully recovered.

I will try to answer your various questions, for which you have no excuse, because it is always with great pleasure that I will give you, if I can, the information that will be useful to you.

First, if the double triangle is called "seal of Solomon", it is because Solomon had, it is said, a ring on which was engraved this sign, and whose possession gave him the power to command all the forces of nature; this tradition is common to Jews and Muslims. The same sign bears still other names, in particular that of "shield of David", and also that of "shield of Mikael"; this last designation is particularly interesting because of the very special role that is attributed in Hebrew angelology to Mikael, the solar archangel, through whom the divine glory is manifested.

As for the triangle in which is inscribed the name of hwhy, I do not believe that one can say that it is only an emblem devoid of meaning in the Christian churches; its meaning still remains. On the other hand, I also do not think that it is mentioned in the liturgical prescriptions of the Bible, nor that it currently appears in the synagogues, where the most usual sign is the double triangle with the name s ( Shaddai = the <sup>yd</sup> Almighty). Moreover, you know that the Jews are very reserved in the use of the tetragrammatic name hwhy, that they write as rarely as possible, and that they never pronounce it, replacing it with Adonai (the Lord) in the reading of the text. sacred. It is said that formerly the High Priest alone had the right to pronounce it once a year, when he entered the Holy of Holies. It is probable that the triangle containing this name must have been a reserved sign, which was not publicly displayed, because it had a particularly sacred character; there is something similar in India, but the word which is inscribed in the triangle is Aum.

For the inscription of Antioch, I see no other possible literal translation than this: "One God again". I showed it to a Hellenist by profession, and even to a Greek; they did not see anything else there. Now what could that mean? Of course, only one hypothesis can be made; here is the interpretation that I would propose: return to the idea of divine unity, which had been known at the origin, then had become obscured, and which reappears in all its purity with Christianity. I give you this explanation for what it is worth; in any case, it seems to me that it is quite plausible.

I think I managed almost immediately to read the other inscription, that of the sigillary key. I very clearly see in it a proper noun in the genitive: yyyyyyyyyyy, "of

Chrysogone" (this was probably the name of the object's owner), followed by two isolated letters  $\ddot{y}$ .  $\ddot{y}$ . which can only be initials, and whose meaning I can't guess. You know that the sign is usually put for  $\ddot{y}$ ; ~~there~~ is indeed a spelling mistake, because it would require  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , with  $\ddot{y}$  and not  $\ddot{y}$ , but that often happens in inscriptions; there is one also in the other, because  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$  with two  $\ddot{y}$  does not exist, and the only correct form is  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ . It is probably because you thought you first saw the figure of Christ that you were unable to read the rest; however, you might not be entirely wrong, as it's very possible that the first two letters XP were intentionally isolated to remind of that number. If I can find anything for the meaning of the last two letters, I'll be sure to let you know.

I arrive at the  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ ; I see clearly what M. Le Cour means: Aour- $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , "light-bearer", it would be an equivalent of Lucifer; but this distortion of the word and this hybrid etymology are purely fanciful. It is in Hebrew that Aor (or rather Aor) means "light"; but M. Le Cour, since he found this word in the teachings of Hiéron, wants to see it everywhere; he seems to me to have rather singular linguistic notions! In reality, the word  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$  has absolutely nothing mysterious about it: it is formed from  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , "? ? ? ", and  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , "who devours" (word identical to the Latin vorax, because b and v change very easily one into the other). There is, as you say, a word  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$  which means "guardian", and this is how the name of the star Arcturus means "the bear keeper" (which is curious, it is that Arthur is exactly the same name arth, means "bear" in Gaelic, and this form is very close to the Greek  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ ). There are also other words  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ : one designates the? ? ? or aurochs; another is for  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , 'mountain? », there is even  $\ddot{y}$   $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$  for  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , « limit ». But, in the compounds,  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , "tail" also changes into  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , as in  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ , "cat", that is to say the animal with the changing tail (and not the "guardian of Aeolus") , as one could translate very literally, and which would however be just as false as the interpretations of M. Le Cour).

As for the origin of this symbol of the serpent biting its tail, it is very possible that it is Egyptian; nothing proves, moreover, that it goes back no further than the Alexandrian period. I am always wary of attributing something to Gnostics without specifying more; there were so many kinds, and what we know about them is so incomplete! Moreover, it is quite probable that they used many symbols which they did not invent. The most usual sense of the  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$  is that, not of eternity, but of perpetuity, that is to say of temporal indefiniteness; it is a cyclical symbol, which does not prevent it from having other meanings at the same time. Moreover, in general, you know that the snake has a beneficial aspect and an evil aspect, and that it is the same for many other symbolic figures; the lion, in particular, is also in this case. There would be a whole theory to develop on that, and I believe that it has never been done; it is true that these are things that are rather difficult to explain.

About Aor, I forgot to point out a rather remarkable comparison with the Latin aurum; the alchemists represented gold by the sun, and the Hindus

call it "mineral light".

Another thing still: some interpret the name of Orpheus by two Hebrew words: Aorophê, meaning "he who heals by light" (the second of these words is found in the name of Raphael, the angel of Mercury); it would even be one of the reasons why Orpheus was taken to represent Christ. We remember very well having seen in your house this figure of Orpheus of which you speak to me; I will read with great interest the notice you are preparing on this subject.

I don't remember seeing any figures associating the cross with the pomegranate, but I'm not surprised that there are; for the pomegranate is a symbol completely analogous to the rose, which also has among its various meanings, that of fecundity. This symbol is not only Phoenician, it is also Hebrew, since pomegranates appeared on the capitals of the columns of the Temple of Jerusalem. About the Phoenician symbol, I saw in Algeria monuments from the Roman era on which the cross and the crescent were associated, and which however were neither Christian nor Muslim (the crescent was the emblem of Tanit).

You ask me what the Word is called among the Hindus; it has not only one name, it has a large number of them, according to the aspects under which one considers it. Indeed, first, the Trimurti does not correspond to the Christian Trinity as has sometimes been supposed; but it is actually constituted by three aspects of the Word, in which all things have their beginning (producing aspect, Brahma = A), their support (conservative aspect, Vishnu = U), and their end (transforming aspect, Shiva = M). The monosyllable Aum is a synthetic name containing the three aspects, to which these three letters correspond as I have just indicated, without speaking of their other symbolic meanings. On the other hand, a very general name is Ishwara, "the Lord"; another is Swayambhû, "The self-subsisting one"; and there are many more. In the case in question, that of the white horse, it is the last manifestation of Vishnu, at the end of the world, that is to say of the current cycle; you see it's the same as in Revelation.

Last week, we had a visit from M. de Frémond, who came here for a few days; I had sent him the manifesto of the Society of the Intellectual Radiation of the Sacred Heart, and he told me that he had communicated it to a vicar general of Nantes who had seemed quite frightened by it, finding that it was a far too bold a plan, etc. ; it's amazing how many people are afraid of anything out of the ordinary!

So far, I have not yet been able to find the time to prepare something for "Regnabit" as Fr. Anizan had asked me; I hope I'll get there anyway, but first I have to finish some book reviews that I've had there for almost a year! It seems to me, if you don't mind, that I could take as a starting point some of the things contained in your articles that have already appeared, and which relate very directly to those that I have seen (for example in your article on Egyptian symbols). The difficulty is to present things in a way that may seem acceptable to people who are not accustomed to these considerations.

Do you know on what days and at what times Fr. Anizan can be found at home ?

If I were sure of meeting him, I would try to go see him one day when I have a little free time.

These ladies send you their warmest regards, and also, dear Sir, please accept my very cordial sentiments.

RG

.....

Paris, June 18, 1925.  
51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir, Your

letter of June 8 reached me, but I never received the number of "Regnabit" where you mentioned the pelican and which you sent me. As you announce to me the sending of the numbers published since March and that I have not yet received anything, I am starting to worry a little and to fear that the package has still been lost or has been stolen. at the post office, which would annoy me greatly. Besides, the printed matter department seems to be doing very badly at the moment; parcels which have been sent to me from Paris itself, lately, have taken four or five days to reach me!

Thank you for the number of the "Cross" containing the article on India; the correspondent of the cross in this country, who is probably the author of this article, is Bishop Rossillon (?), coadjutor of Vizigapatam (?). Unfortunately, like most missionaries, he does not seem to have a very deep understanding of the Hindu spirit; thus, for the true Hindus, the affirmation of the fundamental unity of all the traditional doctrines has never implied the idea of any temptation of fusion between the multiple forms each of which has its *raison d'être*. He certainly attaches too much importance to the manifestations of a few more or less Europeanized circles, which are very uninteresting and whose influence is almost nil. The sects of European and more especially Anglo-Saxon inspiration have very little success in India; the "Râmakrishna Mission", mentioned in the article, is led by an Australian! What is certain is that the Hindus in general have a great deal of sympathy for Catholicism, while they have none for Protestantism; it is all the more regrettable that the missionaries find themselves in contact only with the least interesting elements of the population; the Jesuits seem to have understood this and are currently seeking to get closer to the Brahmins.

Thank you for your very interesting information on ND du Charmier (?); I shall be very happy, when we go to Loudun, to see all that with you. - I hadn't thought that Ruma (?) could be a Frankish name (I was only thinking of a Gallo-Roman name), but the thing is indeed very likely.

I had received, before your letter, a note from Father Anizan, and I went to see him on Tuesday of last week; he is very happy to know that you and I come to the same conclusions on many points, and by very different means. I hope to give him a first article before going on vacation; we are moreover entirely in agreement on the essential ideas.

Yesterday I received a message from Genty, who will not return to Paris until the end of the month; I will then tell him that you accept his offer, but since it will be in July, where will it take

that he sends you the picture? If you can use this one directly for your drawing, it will make things a lot easier.

I didn't think, by sending you (about the ibis) the announcement of "Dante's Esotericism", I would give you the idea of having him come right away; on the contrary, I intended to offer you a copy; but since that is so, I will at least have the pleasure of sending you my other volume these days, the first copies of which arrived yesterday.

The ibis is, among the Egyptians, the hieroglyph of Thoth, that is to say of Wisdom. In Central America, the white heron represents the spiritual center of the world. By applying these symbols to Christ, we have therefore not altered their meaning. - On the seal of which you give me the drawing, it is difficult to know if the bird represented is a heron or a stork, but it is almost certainly one or the other. - In the Far East, it is rather the crane that holds the same place in symbolism.

So what is the origin of this so-called monogram of Henri III, in which the shape of the S with the double serpent is really quite curious? For the Merovingian sign whose imprint you send me, there seems to me no doubt that it is indeed the same symbol. - As for the ouroboros, you are quite right to compare it to the "annual cycle"; moreover, in the "Pistis Sophia", an Alexandrian work which is generally attributed to the Valentinian Gnostics (but which could just as well belong to the Ophites), the body of the serpent is represented as divided into twelve "eons" (the primitive meaning from the Greek *κύκλος* is also that of "cycle") which correspond to the twelve signs of the zodiac. On the other hand, the symbol of the "annual cycle" has a very great importance in many ancient traditions and can give rise to a host of very curious considerations, making it possible to explain at the same time certain particularities of the arrangement of the zodiacs which appear at the church gates. Perhaps one day I will manage to do a study on this question, although it is quite complicated and difficult to explain clearly, like everything related to cyclic theories; so far, I have only had occasion to make a few allusions here and there.

With the best memories of these ladies, receive, dear Sir, the expression of my very cordial feelings.

RG

.....

Blois, August 22,  
1925. 74, rue du Foix.

Dear Sir, We

plan to leave next Thursday for Chiché, and stop at Loudun on the way back; but when will it be exactly? Maybe next week, maybe just at the start of the next. In fact, there is one more complication: it seems that our sister-in-law is at Charroux at the moment, and we don't know for how long; my wife wrote to him yesterday to ask him when she was planning to return to Loudun. As soon as I know something more precise, I will write it to you; but I'm sorry not to be able to fix you longer in advance, and I would be even more sorry if it should inconvenience you in any way for your travels

projected.

Yesterday I received the proofs of my article on the Grail; I immediately corrected them and sent them directly to the printer as agreed.

All my thanks for your kind offer to make your own engravings which will be necessary for my next article; I'm confused to give you this trouble, but I admit that the thing worried me a little, first because of my inability to draw, and then because of the shots that would have had to be done, which would have could have been a nuisance for Fr. Anizan, because I believe that up to now it is you who have done all those who have appeared in "Regnabit". I must add that it is only a question, in the circumstances, of very simple figures and, for the most part, almost geometrical. - I wonder if I will manage to prepare this article before our departure, and yet I would like to, so that we can examine it together when I have the pleasure of seeing you. Time passes with incredible rapidity, and you never manage to do everything you want, far from it; at least it is so for me, and I believe, alas! that I am not the only one in this case.

I have already forgotten several times to ask you if you have published the study on Christ-Orpheus that you told me about some time ago; that will interest me very much.

I wonder if the Chauvet whose study on "Sol and Luna" I mentioned to you the other day might not be Dr. Chauvet, from Nantes, who was very much concerned with hermeticism, and who published various under the pseudonym of Sair; do you know it ?

I have just found something curious about the ibis in Aelian, indicating the various symbolic reasons why this bird was revered by the Egyptians, notably says that when it brings its head and neck under its wings, it takes the figure of a heart.

I have also just read M. Le Cour's article on the Mercure gaulois, and found in it some of its usual singularities; it is true that in the same number of the "Mercure de France", there is an article on the Etruscans, signed Gabriel Arthaud (a name that I did not know at all), which goes far beyond him in terms of linguistic extravagance! It makes you wonder if this journal is going to specialize in these sorts of things. - Coming back to Mr. Le Cour, what is particularly fanciful this time is his explanation of the name of Gavr'innis (?) (and not Gavr-in-is as he breaks it down in his own way ); there is however in this name something which is indeed very curious, but which is not at all what it says about it; I will try to think of telling you about it again, because it is a rather remarkable example of verbal symbolism. - On the other hand, I persist in being persuaded that Montmartre is in reality "Mons Martis", and not Mons Mercurii". There were many mounts of Mercury in Gaul, that's for sure, but there weren't just that, and there could well have been a few mounts of Mars as well. - I noted another inaccuracy: Beuvray, the old Bibracte, is not in Autun, but at some distance from this city; this one (Augustodunum (?)) was founded only by the Romans, and subsequently supplanted its neighbour, the ancient capital of the Aedui, whose name Le Beuvray has kept in a modified form, but still very recognizable. - What seems to me the most interesting and the fairest in the article in

question is the connection, which is easy to make, between the Gallic god Lug and the Greek Logos; but one could draw from it other consequences than those which it indicates, and in which it still derails a little. It seems very likely to me that the name of Loudun must originally have been identical to that of Lyons (Lugdunum or an equivalent form), and I had already thought of that; it must also be your opinion, according to the note in which you are quoted.

I am exactly like you, I await without the slightest impatience the revelations of M. Le Cour on religion (?) which must take the place of Christianity... Besides, I do believe that, if he finds really anything, and whatever its value, he will hardly be able to refrain from saying it and even from publishing it without delay. I have already known many people who, like him, claimed they couldn't speak...simply because they had nothing to say!

See you soon, I hope, dear Sir; Please receive the best memories of these ladies and the expression of my very cordial sentiments.

RG

I believe you will find this letter when you return to Loudun. You can always write to me here, because, if we have left, the correspondence will follow us; or, from next Friday August 28, at Mr. Émile Clisson, Wholesale Wines, in Chiché (Deux-Sèvres).

.....

B (?), August 27, 1925.

Dear Sir, I

received your letter this morning before leaving Blois; so we counted on seeing you when we passed through Loudun. We were therefore greatly disappointed not to find you there, any more than my brother-in-law; real bad luck!

The last time I wrote to you, I noticed, when my card was posted, that I had left blank the time of the train I wanted to add at the station.

I wonder now if this distraction was not the cause of a misunderstanding, but nevertheless it seems to me that there is no other train than the one we took.

- In any case, I hope that nothing untoward has happened to you.

I take the decision, when I arrive here, to send you my manuscript so that you have it all the same without delay. What you do will surely be well done; So don't wait for us to come to Loudun to send it to Fr. Anizan? ? ? shall be the cause of no delay. Thank you again for the kindness with which you take care of this? work ; I hope you won't mind if this time I encroach a little on your domain!

This bird whose drawing you sent me is very curious, and it seems to me that the connection with the passage of Elien is essential. - As for "a man's bone", it's fun, but not serious; it is still fortunate that M. Le Cour was not enthusiastic about this absurd story!

For our stay at Loudun, I don't know anything more than what I told you.

Excuse my handwriting: I'm writing to you at the post office and am very badly settled.

In all haste, and cordially to you.

RG

.....  
Paris, October 28, 1925.  
51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir, About

ten days ago I sent Father Anizan a small article for the December issue; the main part of this article concerns, as I tell you, the symbolism of Janus, and I have attached to it some considerations relating to the symbolic trees, and in particular to the "Tree of Life" in its various forms. I ended with a response to the objection formulated on the subject of the Grail, a response which, moreover, is little more than the development of that which Fr. Anizan had already joined to the objection itself. .

In acknowledging receipt of this article, Fr. Anizan writes to me that he is very happy with what I am saying about the fundamental identity of all the traditions, because it seems to him very important to remember that the Church of Christ is from the beginning. That's exactly what I think, and I'm very happy to see that we understand each other perfectly.

Fr. Anizan also tells me that he has sent you, on the spiritual dwelling in the Heart of Jesus, some texts which will allow you to "document" an article on this subject. I hope you will give us that soon; after the allusions that we have both already been led to make to this question, it seems to me that it would be quite appropriate to treat it with a certain development.

The first proofs of my November article were full of mistakes, and a picture had been misplaced; so I asked for other proofs, and I got them last week. The printer says that it is not usually possible to send two proofs, but it seems that this month there will be some delay because of the tables.

For your bar(?) said Breton, it would certainly be interesting to be able to publish this somewhere; to make it into a brochure, it might be necessary to add a few other things related to the same subject or to related subjects. Finally, the thing does not seem impossible to me, and if I have an idea, I will communicate it to you. In any case, when I have the pleasure of seeing you again, I will not forget to ask you to show me this document. - I will also try to think of the "Hermetic Symbolism" of Wirth.

For the figure of the "Quest of the Grail" of which I spoke to you, I think that it is indeed only important in that it shows that the swastika was known and even in fairly common use. in the Middle Ages, because otherwise it would not have occurred to a draftsman to use it as a sort of diagram for the construction of certain figures, even without any symbolic intention.

Thank you for the photograph, which I will give to Genty the next time I see him.

Thank you also for the communication of the letter from M. Le Cour, which I am returning to you herewith. It is hardly necessary to tell you that, this time again, his objections do not

don't affect me much. First of all, if he has only seen of me, on Agatha, what appeared in the "Cahiers du Mois", it is hardly possible for him to know what I will be able to say in my work in preparation. , because I did not want to enter there into considerations which would certainly not have been understood by the public to which it was addressed. On the other hand, for the meaning of the word, I see where he is coming from: Ag-ar tha, ag=Agni, ar=Aor; it's always the same story. It is not the same thing to ignore the meaning of a word, as he says, or to not see fit to take into account a supposed meaning which is not based on anything serious. I will have to find a way, in some article for "Regnabit", to slip a note on this affair of Agni and Aor which needs to be worked out.

Another thing about M. Le Cour: he wrote to my aunt a few days ago to thank her for a photograph of her father which she had had for a very long time and which she had given to him by my friend Faugeron (the editor of the "Cahiers du Portique") who meets him from time to time. Perhaps, as a result of this, we will see it appear here. It seems that he didn't have this photograph, and that, as usual, he saw in it I don't know what "extra-terrestrial" sign!

The "Psyche" of Abbé Pron, forming the second volume of the "Cahiers du Portico", has just been published.

What you have been told about the marble of St Denis d'Orques is quite curious; I hadn't noticed that the wound in the heart had the shape of an iod, and I don't know if one should believe that this shape was given intentionally. If so, the whole thing would have a very interesting meaning and should be interpreted by means of a certain relationship which exists between the symbolism of the heart and that of the egg, a relationship which, before receiving your letter, I had just allude to in a footnote to my December article. If you don't quite understand what I mean, I'll explain it more fully next time. In any case, even if the interpretation in question were justified, it would simply be added to the one you gave and would change absolutely nothing.

These ladies send you their fondest memories, and I, dear Sir, please always believe in my very cordial sentiments.

RG

.....

Paris, December 2,  
1925. 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir, I am

a little worried to have not heard from you for so long; I like to believe, however, that this silence has no unfortunate cause and that your health has nothing to do with it. I wonder if you have indeed received my last letter, in which I returned to you that of M. Le Cour which you had communicated to me, or if it is your reply which has not reached me; the postal service is still very bad. But perhaps it was simply because you were too busy or absent from Loudun that it was not possible for you to write to me.

Anyway, I don't want to delay any longer to thank you for having me

mentioned so kindly in the article where you replied to Fr. Hamon, and to congratulate you on having been able to keep in this response such a courteous and measured tone, which Fr. Anizan was very happy about. It is better to avoid as much as possible that the discussion takes an unpleasant turn, which happens all too often and too easily.

I saw Fr. Anizan about ten days ago, and I gave him an article for January in which, as a follow-up to what he wrote himself, I insisted on the suitability and the necessity of symbolism. He had just received the proofs of the new appeal from the Society of Intellectual Radiation, which bears our signatures; we reviewed them together.

Following my last article, I received a long letter from a priest of Nièvre, who was very satisfied with it and who explains to me some very interesting considerations on the symbolism of triangles; it will no doubt be necessary to come back to all this again.

On the other hand, I am told that in Egyptian hieroglyphics, the cross is found in the form (a sign different from the ansate cross) to express an idea of "salvation" (for example in the name of Ptolemy Soter); did you know that?

I spoke to Fr. Anizan about what you told me about the heart of St Denis d'Orques and the form of iod given to the wound; he thinks like me that the interpretation in question should not be ruled out "a priori", especially since there is a print by Callot, dating from 1625, in which three iods are depicted inside the Heart of Christ; he himself once spoke of it in "Regnabit" (December 1922). If you have received my last letter as I hope you will all the same, you will kindly tell me if the explanation I gave you about this iod was intelligible, although a little sketchy. Moreover, one day or another, I will no doubt be led to speak in some article of the "Egg of the World" and of the relations which exist between the symbols of the heart and the egg.

I was recently sent a brochure on the capitals of the church of St Nectaire, an iconographic study by Abbé G. Rochias. I find something there that I think might be of interest to you; I transcribe the passage:

"There are two similar capitals, each of which shows us three eagles, their wings spread and extended in the form of the arms of a cross? The one in the middle has a straight head and seems alive. The other two have their heads bowed to their chests and seem dead: the beak of the one on the right has remained half-open, in the position in which death surprised it. - In the symbolic fauna, the eagle, king of the air, is an image of Christ. Those of these capitals seem to represent Christ on the cross: that of the main face, Christ still alive on the cross, and those of the side faces, the dead Christ. »

I enclose a tracing taken somehow on the photograph of one of these two capitals; these date from the 12th century.

I have a request to address to you on behalf of Mr. Charles Grolleau, who directs the "Bulletin des Écrivains et Artistes catholiques"; he had been obliged to suspend publication of it lately, for lack of funds, but the appeal which he had inserted in the last issue (published during the holidays and also containing an article by Fr. Anizan on the Society of the Intellectual Radiation of the Sacred Heart) having attracted new promises of subscription to him in quite a large number, he hopes to be able to resume it soon. The drawing that appeared on the cover of the Bulletin was

too big to allow the table of contents to be placed there, which was inconvenient; he would therefore like to replace it with another of lesser dimensions, and he thinks that the best would be the reproduction of some old iconographic document.

He would also like to know if, among all the symbols of Christ known to you, there could not be found one which would be more particularly appropriate to the character of the Bulletin.

I forgot something about the capitals of St Nectaire: on several of them, the devil figure accompanied by fruits of arum (?); would you know what could be the origin of this symbol that I had never encountered before?

I hope to hear from you soon.

These ladies recall to your good memory, and I, dear sir, please to believe me cordially yours.

RG

.....

Paris, December 30, 1925.  
51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir, It is my

turn this time to be very late with you; I have been overloaded with work all these days, and I am taking advantage of the few days off to finally bring my correspondence more or less up to date. I like to believe that your health is better now, in spite of the bad weather with which we are afflicted.

It is quite natural that I quote your works and rely on your documentation; you are really too modest... Your December article is still very interesting, and I look forward to seeing the rest of it. I, for my part, prepared two other small articles for January and February, while waiting for more important studies that I have not been able to find the time to finalize so far.

I saw Father Anizan last Thursday; we have talked about a planned meeting which could probably take place in February, and we hope that, like last year, you will be able to come to Paris on this occasion.

I think you have received the Bulletin that I sent you following your letter (it is a number that I had in duplicate); naturally, I have not yet spoken of anything to M. Grolleau; it seems to me that the eagle with the book on the chest would suit admirably.

For the brochure of Saint-Nectaire, it is indeed regrettable that many important details are not clearly visible in the photographs; by contacting the author, perhaps you will be able to obtain better documents; would you be so kind as to let me know. Do not return the pamphlet to me until you no longer need it; it's not very urgent.

I did not know what you tell me about the arum (?), and which explains its association with the devil; it would be good to know if this plant has not also received some popular name of the same kind in Auvergne.

Your pisciform amulet is really very curious; it makes me think that the Phoenician Astarte could well have been identified with the Syrian goddess Atergatis or Derceto. There would be quite remarkable considerations to develop

on the symbolism of the fish; it seems to me that we have already talked about it. You also know that, in Hieron, Oannes and Dagon have always been considered as figures of Christ, and it seems to me that it is with good reason; perhaps it has never been justified clearly enough.

I will be happy to know what you think of what I have written on the symbolism of Janus; these are moreover only simple indications, which would need to be developed and supplemented; I will surely come back to it one day or another; in truth, there would be a whole little volume to do on that.

As for Abbé Chaux-Bertrand, he did not speak to me about his ideas on noble heraldry, so that I did not have the opportunity to appreciate his knowledge in this matter. There were some interesting things in his letter, but it certainly needs to be worked out; I believe he would gladly launch into considerations which he could not support on a sufficiently solid basis. This is what I said to Fr. Anizan, who asked me if I thought that he should be invited to collaborate with "Regnabit"; I think it's better to be too careful than not enough.

Attached is M. Le Cour's letter, which is indeed very amusing. You have to believe that the story of the fleur-de-lys and the chrism particularly struck him, because he also went to speak to my friend Faugeron about it. I confess to you that I do not see the danger there can be in saying such a thing; and, if there are indeed things that it is not good to say too openly, for reasons of opportunity; I believe, without boasting, that I can realize it better than he. It is really curious that, for only two or three years that he has been involved in these studies, he imagines himself to know more than everyone else. In any case, his astonishment quite simply proves that he has understood nothing of what I am doing; the "evolution" of which he speaks does not exist in me, and for almost twenty years I have never changed my orientation; I admit on the same basis all traditions, Eastern or Western, which are only different expressions of one and the same unity. My Janus will probably have frightened him again, unless there again he doesn't understand: in any case, very fortunately, everything he threatens us with doesn't frighten me more than you do. I wonder where he is coming from when he mixes Aristotle, scholasticism, etc. with all this. ; he confuses the initiatory point of view and the philosophical point of view, which have nothing in common, and I am tempted to conclude that the first completely escapes him. In this regard, if he speaks to you again about Agartha and all that I can know or ignore about it, then tell him that he is willing to wait for my "King of the World"; it would be the least of things, since, up to now, I have not explained myself on this. Did he ever tell you about the "Grail militia"? I'll tell you another day why I'm asking you that. You will be very kind if you continue to share your reflections with me; we don't have so many distractions of this kind! - I only skimmed his last article in the "Mercury"; I'll try to remember to talk to you about it.

The pavement at the wheel is very curious; it is always the same symbol. - Thank you for the smear of your marble; I am going to examine it again and try to compare it with other figures.

Thank you for your good wishes; please receive ours in exchange, and

always believe in my very cordial sentiments.

RG

.....  
Paris, January 23,  
1926. 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir,

We are sorry to know that your health still leaves something to be desired, and we let's hope she recovers quickly.

M. Grolleau asks me to convey to you his very sincere thanks for the offer you have so kindly made to engrave the eagle and the book for the title of his Bulletin, and he accepts it with the greatest pleasure. in case it is possible for him to resume his publication. So far, in fact, the promises of subscriptions and donations he has received have not yet amounted to a sufficient figure to cover the costs; so we have to wait...

I saw Fr. Anizan on Thursday; he gave me the proofs of your article on Orpheus, which I find quite good and very interesting. In this connection, has the note that you had given elsewhere on the same subject finally appeared? - He also told me about the extraordinary visit you received lately; if you will kindly give me a few details on this, you will give me great pleasure, for you can imagine that it interests me very much.

We talked about various projects, and in particular the transformation of "Regnabit" into a more special organ of the Society of Intellectual Radiation; it seems to me that this can very well be done and that it would be better than having a bulletin alongside the Review, the collaborators of one and the other having moreover necessarily to be the same. - As for the meeting that we were planning to hold in February, it will be postponed until after Easter, Fr. Anizan being too busy so far; we do hope that your health will be better at this time and that you will be able to come; your absence on this occasion would be very regrettable.

I gave, for the March issue, a small article where I return again to the question of symbolic trees (in relation to the Tree of Life and the Tree of Science). I have many other things in mind, but I still don't have time to collect my notes and put them into focus. Fr. Anizan asks me to do something about the ideas formerly attached to that of the "Centre" and the corresponding symbols. If it is necessary to make appear some signs there, we will still have recourse to your kindness for the stereotypes; in this case I will try to make the drawings as best I can and send them to you early enough so that you have plenty of time to do this little work.

A few days ago I received a letter from Abbé Martin, who was particularly satisfied with my January article, and who fully approves of my point of view, particularly with regard to the fundamental unity of all the traditions.

It seems that in an Italian newspaper, they made fun of the etymologies of M. Le Cour, in connection with his last article on Atlantis; I was even told that, following this criticism, the "Mercury" was no longer prepared to publish any other studies by him. It is indeed possible that he drew on the works of Schuré, where there is no

besides nothing serious: in there, all that is not more or less disguised plagiarism is only pure fantasy. But M. Le Cour protests that he has borrowed nothing from anyone, and he claims to write under a kind of inspiration, he doubtless believes it in good faith; let's not forget that he was a spiritualist, and then he has such an imagination! ...

Thank you very much for what you said for me to M. Camille Aymard; I take good note of it, and I will not fail to take my work to him when it appears (but when will it be ready? I cannot finish it); it will be a very good thing if he talks about it in La Liberté.

It's an excellent idea that you have for the congress of learned societies, deal with the question of the signs of the Loudun Carmelites.

There are indeed, as you say, several types of Janus; this is why I have taken care to point out how the symbolism of this divinity is complex and presents multiple aspects.

Astarté, Itar and Tanit are indeed identical (the first two names are only one in two slightly different forms). About your statuettes, it is good to note that the triangle, the cup of which it is the diagram, and also the lotus flower in one of its meanings, are signs all having a direct relationship with water, which is everywhere the symbol of the feminine principle.

I know that the rose has, among its senses, that of the source of life, but unfortunately I do not know any representations relating to it, and yet there must almost certainly exist. Were you able to find the Italian fountain? If I happen to come across anything about it, you can be sure I'll be sure to let you know.

Always believe, I beg you, dear Sir, in our fondest memory.

RG

.....

Paris, February 25,  
1926. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir, I come

today (in agreement with Father Anizan moreover) to bother you with a request for engravings, as if you did not have enough of all your work! As I believe I told you in my last letter, it is for an article on the idea of the Center in ancient traditions that I intend to prepare for the May issue; so it would have to be ready by March 25, which is just a month.

For the rest, it is reduced to very few things: three shots in all. First, the circle with a point in the center (astrological sign of the sun); I think you will be

possible to do so that the point is clearly visible.



Next, the circle divided by the cross (I will also reproduce the six- and eight-spoke wheels, but the clichés already exist, since they appeared in my November article).



Finally, the swastika in its two forms oriented in opposite directions, which you can very well combine on the same picture by arranging them as shown below.



And

above. - Thank you in advance for giving you this trouble.

About the swastika, this word is quite masculine in Sanskrit; so there is no reason to make it feminine in French.

But no, it wasn't me who sent you the moked (?) Zoroastrian, and I even regret not having seen him during his visit to Paris. If he ran into Mr. Le Cour or on someone of his group; it is certain that they will have taken good care not to send it to me. I shall be glad to have details of your interview when I have the pleasure of seeing you; it must indeed be quite difficult to summarize in a letter.

There were certainly relations between the Lamas and Christian organizations which existed in the Middle Ages in Central Asia, and which are usually regarded as "Nestorian" (but what precise meaning should be attributed to this designation?). As for saying that there was influence strictly speaking; it's a bit difficult, and I think it's difficult to be very positive about it; it's all quite complicated.

Yesterday I corrected the proofs of my article on the "Trees of Paradise". For April, I sent Father Anizan a small work entitled "The Radiant Heart and the Flaming Heart", in which I consider the two main meanings of the Heart (Intelligence and Love) relating them to the symbolism of fire in its two complementary aspects (light and heat).

I look forward to reading your pages on the emblematic Rose; is it for the next issue? - All the people to whom I pass "Regnabit" appreciate your articles very much and give me the greatest praise, well deserved by the way.

Have you finished your memoirs for the Congress of Learned Societies? I do not didn't think it had to be held so soon.

Have you been able to find the time to write to the parish priest of Saint-Nectaire, and do you got something? I will be happy to know it.

You have no doubt learned of the terrible accident which caused the death of Mme de Noaillat and Mlle Lépine. It reminded us of what happened to you here last year; Luckily you got away with it without too much trouble!

I think it would be better to keep the current format for "Regnabit", which is more convenient than a larger format, and increase the number of pages when necessary. We must think of people who read while circulating, as there are many of them in Paris especially. This is only a detail, but it seems to me that it is still important. - In any case, all the people that Father Anizan consulted were of the opinion that it is "Regnabit" which must be the organ of the Society, and that there is no need to create a another special review, which would necessarily duplicate the work.

Please, dear Sir, receive the best memories of these ladies and believe in my most cordial sentiments.

RG

.....

Paris, March 13,  
1926. 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir, The

brochure on Saint-Nectaire reached me almost at the same time as your letter. You don't need to apologize for not sending it back to me sooner, because it wasn't particularly urgent. You will tell me if you have an answer from the author and if you are satisfied with it.

This morning I received the proofs of your pictures; many thanks for doing this so promptly. The article is not even written yet; I'm going to have to get started without delay so that I can send it to Fr. Anizan before the 25th as I promised him. The shots are quite clear; I see that you have slightly modified the arrangement you indicated to me in your letter, but that is of no importance, and that is very well. Thank you also for going to the trouble of redoing the wheels, despite all the work you have.

I am happy to know that your two papers for the Congress of Learned Societies have been accepted; would it be indiscreet to ask you what the subjects are? You had spoken to me, for one of the signs of the Carmelites; does the other also relate to a question of the same kind?

I am also happy with what you tell me about the very favorable way in which my articles are appreciated by your friends; I hope that the sequel will also give them satisfaction. For my part, I have already obtained a few subscriptions and I think I will have others.

What you tell me about the Radiant Heart and the Flaming Heart agrees completely with my interpretation, and it makes me think that perhaps you could give my article a complement, more especially from the iconographic and heraldic point of view. ; I think that would be a great thing. - So what are you doing with the lions for April? This intrigues me a bit.

I haven't received the March issue yet; there is a lot of delay this month.

It is indeed not easy to read in the streets of Paris, but one reads above all in the metro and buses; you have to remember that many people here have hardly any free time and thus use up the time they spend in forced comings and goings. - As you say, we would have to see if the savings made by increasing the format would really be worth it and would compensate for the disadvantages of this change; I confess to you that I have no precise data on this.

I wrote a few days ago to Father Anizan; he had communicated to me the suggestion of Mr. Foussier, to replace "Sacred Heart" by "Sacred Heart" in the title of the Society. For my part, I do not really see the advantage of this modification, which would hardly be understood, and I do not believe that this is what can dissipate certain prejudices; rather, we have to rely on what we will do to achieve this result. What do you think ?

Genty pointed out to me, for your benefit, the "History of God" by Didron, in which are reproduced, it seems, a large number of representations of the three persons of the Trinity, together and separately; maybe you know this book. - Do you also know "The Symbols of the Cross", by Abbé Boiteux? I was only told the title of this book, so I don't know if it contains anything really

interesting, or even from what point of view the subject is treated.

For some time now I forgot to ask you if you know of any books on St Bernard; I have been asked to do a little work on this, for a collection of lives of saints which is to appear towards the end of this year, and I am trying to obtain information from various quarters, for I will have to occupy myself of that after the Easter holidays. Fr. Anizan pointed out to me the work of Vacandard (?) perhaps you can give me some other information.

It seems that the "Mercure de France" definitely no longer wants to accept M. Le Cour's articles; this one accuses one of our compatriots from Blois of having served him against the management; I don't know if that is true or if it is still an effect of his too rich imagination. Are you still in correspondence with him, and does he continue to be indignant at our untimely "revelations"?

These ladies offer you their best compliments, and I, dear Sir,  
Please accept my very cordial sentiments.

RG

.....

Blois, August 4,  
1926. 74, rue du Foix.

Dear Sir and friend,

Here we are all the same in Blois, and we are not sorry about it; but I had to bring some work here which I hoped to finish before leaving Paris. I haven't been able to take care of the life of St Bernard yet, and it must be finished at the end of this month!

My wife continues to go as well as she can, but still tires quite easily, which should come as no surprise. You are fully excused, believe it well, for not having asked for news directly; my brother-in-law only wrote to us once, and my sister-in-law was then in Vichy; that is why your commission was not done. Besides, to simplify the correspondence, I didn't write to the whole family, I couldn't have succeeded; those who received news passed it on to others.

I'm finally rid of my flu, but I still feel the fatigue that comes with it.  
result; Finally, it will happen little by little, we must at least hope so.

Don't your frequent trips to Poitiers tire you too much? It is astonishing that the libraries of this city do not have the collections of periodicals as important as those of which you speak to me; but could you not, thanks to your title of correspondent of the ministry, make them come from other libraries?

Your new acquisitions indeed seem very interesting; I will be happy to see that if we go to Loudun; but will we get there, and when? I don't really know yet, you can be sure that I will let you know.

I understand that you are sometimes a little frightened by the work you have undertaken, and that the necessary research requires a lot of your time; but I'm sure you'll do just fine. It is certain that it is better not to hurry too much than to risk errors or annoying gaps; on the other hand, it may not be possible to do something completely complete, but

the mass of documents that you have collected is certainly much more considerable already than all that has been used by others for work relating to the same question; I am not saying works of the same kind; because I believe that, to tell the truth, it does not yet exist.

You can keep the bulletin of St. Francis Xavier; I still have several copies, and I can even have more if needed.

Yesterday I sent Father Buron my article for September-October, on "the Holy Land and the Heart of the World"; it follows on from the one I told you about and which will appear in the July-August issue. For this one, we had a concern: the cliché of the marble of St Denis d'Orques, which was absolutely necessary, could not be found; Hirt said he had sent it to Tiqui, and the latter said he had not; Finally, he has been found all the same, and we will get off with a little delay.

My article on the Omphalos will be found in large part in my study on the "King of the World", the manuscript of which I finally handed over to the publisher before leaving Paris; he must send it to the printer without delay, for he would like it to appear around the month of November, and, with the printers, it is necessary to set about it a long time in advance.

Mr. Le Cour is really lucky to be able to afford a trip to Greece and Crete; besides, I wonder how he manages to do that, because it seems that he is not rich and that his salary from the ministry is not very high, and travel is terribly expensive at the moment; finally, good for him if he can do it. Only, I wonder what profit he will derive from it and what fantastic discoveries he will still bring us! As for his "Society for Atlantean Studies" and all the projects connected with it, I am very much afraid that all this will remain in the air, especially if there is no funding. It seems that he announces the creation of an "Atlantean Institute, center of Western traditionalism, whose magnificent plan already exists"; I suppose that this plan is none other than that of the "Temple" by Landowski, which appeared last year at the Exhibition of Decorative Arts, and to which he alludes in his letter. Where did he get that June 24 was the Feast of the Sacred Heart?

Many of his assertions are unfortunately of this force! I also admire his postscript on the Eucharistic Congress which took place at the end of June, and which, in his opinion, should no doubt have been given in the issue prepared for June 1 ; and then "Regnabit" is still not an organ of information! - So much the better if he is a little back from his prejudices against me; but I confess to you that his criticisms have never impressed me very much; only I know that he has the unfortunate habit of going off to gossip right and left, and it's always unpleasant.

Genty went, like every year, to spend the month of June in Brittany; they told him over there, about Marcel Baudoin, pretty much the same things that you told me; we must therefore believe that the character is well known and not very advantageous.

Thank you for your information for the sign of which I sent you the reproduction the last time; it seems that your explanation must be quite correct. Om told me on the other hand that it had to be a lock and key, but that was a bit vague, and I like your clarification better. I will have to try to find out, when I get back to Paris, exactly where the marquee is located.

question ; I only know that it is around Autun. It's a pity that the piece of which you give me the drawing is indecipherable; it would be curious if the two objects were from the same source. In any case, there would be very interesting things to examine concerning the symbolism of the key, which is connected, as you know, with that of Janus, and also with the figurations of the "Axis of the World". So you are quite right to think of a relationship between the cross formed of four keys and the swastika; there seems to be no doubt about it.

M. de Frémond sent me, in his last letter, number 4 of the "Lion"; I will be curious to see the precedents on occasion, but, according to this one, I believe indeed that there is not much to be drawn from it. All this is vague and nebulous, quite insignificant even in appearance; but yet these stories involving prophecies of all kinds are never completely harmless. We should know who are the people who run this publication, and what their intentions are; no doubt they work for some pretender, but which one? I wonder if it wouldn't simply be a certain Louis de Bourbon, who is a Naundorff from I don't know which branch; and here is what gave me this idea: the said Louis de Bourbon publishes a journal entitled "Le Crible", which is rather badly written, and which I receive from time to time; however there is in each number of this newspaper a note thus conceived: "The newspaper "Le Crible" wanting to remain absolutely free, does not accept subscriptions. For the same reason, it accepts neither advertisements nor publicity. - He invites his friends today and those who will become friends tomorrow, convinced of the usefulness of his campaign, to send him their contributions, support which will make it possible to broaden and intensify his propaganda. Now you will find in the "Lion" an identical opinion, with only a few words changed; I can't believe this is just a coincidence. I would add that the suitor in question, who clearly poses as such and believes himself called upon to save France, has frequented occultist circles a great deal; this can explain many things.

I think like you that the patronage of Cardinal Dubois should suffice to shelter us from certain attacks; but there are people who are not satisfied with so little ... But is someone who contributes to journals which have no more imprimatur than ours well qualified to quarrel with us on this subject? ? I am thinking of the "Revue de Philosophie", which does not have it, although it is the organ of the Catholic Institute, and where there are quite often articles by Maquart. This is not the author of the work referred to by Fr. Anizan, who told me the name, but I cannot manage to remember it.

Mr. Thomas is indeed very prudent, and at the same time very little "liberal" in the bad sense of the word; I observed with great satisfaction that he was as reluctant as I was to allow himself to be drawn into unfortunate concessions or compromises. If I have the pleasure of seeing you, you will have to remind me to tell you about a certain unusual congress which was held in June. I will also have to tell you about the stories of Maritain; the latter is, moreover, in the process of doing himself great harm, in serious circles, by his association with Cocteau and other no less extravagant personages.

There is a question that was raised at our last meeting and which remained unresolved: should we, at the beginning of the 1st part of "Regnabit", put "History and

Doctrine" instead of simply "Doctrine" as we have done so far? I don't see any inconvenience for my part; And you ? From the point of view in which we both place ourselves, the two things can hardly be separated.

Receive, I pray you, dear sir and friend, the best compliments of these ladies, and believe in my most cordial sentiments.

RG

.....

Blois, August 25,  
1926. 74, rue du Foix.

Dear Sir and friend,

We will arrive in Loudun the day after tomorrow Friday, at 6:30 in the evening. I would have liked to have been able to warn you longer in advance, but our trip was decided very abruptly. Everything was contingent on the completion of my work on St Bernard, which was to be sent before the end of this month; but I have only just finished it, and I sent it off this very morning. On the other hand, it was not possible for us to postpone it, because I am going to have lessons here in September, and we will have to return on the 3rd; we therefore have just one week. I do hope that we will find you at Loudun and that you will not be obliged to be absent precisely on these days; I would be most sorry if I could not take advantage of this opportunity to talk to you about everything that interests us. I also hope that we can find a day to go together to Chinon as we had planned.

Father Buron wrote to us that he would arrive at Loudun on September 1 ; we will probably still be there. He promises to stop at Blois too; it would be for the 5th. I am writing to him at the same time as to you.

I forgot to tell you, in my last letter, that I had not been able, because of all our misadventures, to go and see M. Camille Aymard as you had urged me to do. It will therefore be for the start of the school year, when the "King of the World" will appear. I am advised that the manuscript was sent to the printer a fortnight ago; I therefore expect to receive proofs soon.

I also forgot to answer a point in your letter, concerning Desvallières; I believe that he imagines, quite wrongly moreover, that we want to compete with the groups of artists that he directs with Maurice Denis: Arche, Société de St Jean, etc. This is a probable reason for hostility; and there is another, which is the influence of Maritain on all these circles.

Here is another interesting reference to add to your innumerable files, if you do not already have it: St Bernard represents the union of the Word with humanity, in the person of Christ, in the form of "a pure lily whose dazzlingly white corolla forms a graceful cup, a crown which represents human nature, and whose golden pistils symbolize the rays of divinity.

(Sermon LXX, 5). It sounds a lot like what you told us about the daisy; it is exactly the same symbolism.

On the other hand, here is what I note in a report of one of the last sessions of the Academy of Inscriptions: "In Syria, in Homs, the ancient city

of Emesa (?), Mr. Cumont discovered an engraved stone on which is a sort of coat of arms. It is the very childhood of the coat of arms. One notices, on this intaglio, the lunar crescent, the star of the family of Julius Caesar; above it is the sign of Cancer. On the other side, an eagle carrying a sun; he had on his right a lion, and on his left a griffin. The object seems quite curious, but what do you think of the interpretation? For me, it has nothing to do with Julius Caesar or the coat of arms; everything is purely astrological in there: the sun on one side, the moon on the other; Cancer is the zodiacal domicile of the moon, as Leo is that of the sun; the eagle and the griffin are also animals with solar symbolism. It is all the same astonishing that certain scholars do not even notice things as simple as these!

See you soon, dear Sir and friend, and cordially to you.

RG

.....  
Paris, February 19,  
1927. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir and friend It

is I who should have written to you earlier, because I learned that you had a bad start to the year, let's hope that this unfortunate period is now over.

We, too, have all had more or less the flu; it ended up happening, but we feel the consequences of this annoying disease for a long time.

Thursday's meeting went well; the dissolution is a done thing, so that we are free now on this side. The most difficult question was that of changing the title; if the deletion of the word "Company" is sufficient legally, as we believe, we will stop there. M. Buron told me that he would try to write to you in a few days.

I am well behind this month for my article, which is not done yet; I will have to hurry; fortunately it takes less time to prepare than yours, with the work that all these shots must give you! What you do is always very interesting; I looked through your study on the Lamb, and I saw that you asked a question there addressed to me; I will try to answer it later. The Christian influences in certain lamaic rites do not seem to me questionable; but as regards the "King of the World" (who, moreover, perhaps does not reside in Tibet), the question is quite different, and, in this case, it is certainly a question of a symbol prior to Christianity. This is also related to apocalyptic symbolism, which I do not believe can be sufficiently explained by the role of the Lamb in Judaism alone.

With regard to the "King of the World", you have seen from M. Le Cour's letter that my book has finally appeared; I should rather say that it is half published, because the printer has sent so far only a part of the copies, so that I do not have any at my disposal yet; as soon as I have one, I will be happy to send you one. At that time, I will ask for an appointment with M. Camille Aymard, as you asked me to do, to give him the volume myself.

The Éditions de la Sirène no longer exist; the collection was acquired by the Crès bookstore. Yesterday I received from M. Grolleau the information you asked for: the

"Bestiary" by Guillaume Apollinaire, which had been published at a fairly inexpensive price, is now out of print; but you need not regret it, for it is simply a rather fanciful poem, like the engravings themselves, which, although partly inspired by ancient figures, have no documentary character; so you certainly couldn't find anything to use in there.

I am very pleased with your approval of my complementary article on fish; there would no doubt be many more things to say on this, but I believe that it clarifies a few points that you had only mentioned in passing, in particular for the dolphin and its relationship with the octopus (I had completed my notes about this on proofs, after reading your January article). About the octopus, there is a bit of truth in what M. Le Cour says, in the sense that this emblem does not always have a satanic character; but, besides that, what fantasies! Its combination of octopus and pulp? does not stand upright; all of this is self-evident when you know that the word octopus is simply an alteration of polyp, so that it only alludes to the many many feet or arms of the animal. As for the head of Medusa and its linguistic interpretation, that seems to me just as risky, no less than the affirmation that the word eureka does not appear in the Greek dictionary; perhaps he did not know how to find it there, because it is the perfect of an irregular verb. I see here, on the other hand, the influence of an idea of M. Dujols, who claimed that a large number of words had been removed from the Greek dictionaries published since the 17th century; I don't know what he was basing that statement on.

I had something to report to you about a figure that could well relate to the crustacean, but I have not found the note concerning it, which dates from many years ago; it will be for next time.

There is a symbol of Christ which I have always forgotten to tell you about and which has a certain importance: it is the griffin; do you have any examples in the iconography? It seems to me that there must be; in any case, this symbol is found in Dante, for whom the double nature of this animal represents the union of the divine nature and the human nature in Christ. It should be noted, on the other hand, that the griffin, among the ancients, is often figured holding the wheel of the world.

I saw a few days ago, in the Louvre, an Etruscan vase on which appear both the ordinary swastika and the <sup>fl</sup>claviger swastika similar to the one whose drawing you communicated to me. On the other hand, on archaic Greek vases, there is, besides the swastika in various forms, another sign frequently repeated, and which I had not noticed until now; I wonder what its exact meaning may be; maybe you know something about it.

M. Martin, who was at our meeting on Thursday, showed me a note from M. de Sarachaga in which it is a question of hearts figured on the bandages of the mummies; have you ever heard of this? This would have to be checked; some of these hearts would carry in their center the swastika (which M. de Sarachaga wrote zwadisca, I do not really know why, because this form does not correspond to anything linguistically, unless it exists in some dialect of Russia or countries Baltics, which is possible after all).

I see that not everything is going as desired in the Atlantean Society, whose

committee rather lacks homogeneity; under such conditions, it is very doubtful that this will succeed. However, what M. Le Cour says about the attendance at conferences is correct; we attended that of January 22, having received an invitation from the speaker whom we know, and it is true that not everyone was able to enter. Mr. Le Cour, who always thinks big, dreams of celebrating the anniversary of the foundation in the great amphitheater of the Sorbonne.

I now come to the letter which concerns me, and which I thank you for having communicated to me; you can reassure yourself, I don't take this tragically. What says . The Cour of my so-called "evolution" had already come to me from another source; he is greatly mistaken in imagining that I have changed my mind on any point, not only since my first books, but for much longer. Also, when he says that I am now on his land, he reverses the roles a little, because I have been on the said land for well over twenty years, while he himself has only been there for three or four years. . It was he who "evolved", moreover fortunately for him, because, before that, he was mainly concerned with turning the tables, which never happened to me; and if I have, as he says, frequented various circles, in order to see if there was something interesting there (I was moreover quickly fixed in this respect), that does not imply with me no change of ideas.

I do not regret what I have written on Greece, even if it should deprive me of the honor of being part of the Atlantean Society, an honor which I would have declined moreover if the proposal had been made to me. , because I don't have much time to waste. It seems, from what we have seen and heard, that it is above all a question of literary and artistic manifestations; it lacks a bit too much of a serious basis.

Criticism of my style affects me little, for I only seek to be correct and as clear as possible; I do neither poetry nor literature, and that would even be contrary to what I propose to myself. It's about science, even though it's a completely different science from that of the "officials", and I don't really see what "lyricism" would have to do with that. Finally, if I often happen to multiply the notes and cross-references, it is because everything I have to say could not fit into the text without harming the rest of the presentation.

I never wrote the sentence supposedly taken from the "Introduction to the Study of Hindu Doctrines"; M. Le Cour read the passage in the same way as the Chinon inscription! These are different hypotheses regarding the end of modern Western civilization; the first, the most unfavorable, would be the loss of all civilization in the West, "a state of degeneration more or less comparable to that of present-day savages." Then here is the sentence in question: "The second case would be that where the representatives of other civilizations, that is to say the Eastern peoples, to save the Western world from this irremediable decline, would assimilate it willingly or unwillingly. force, supposing that the thing were possible, and that moreover the East consented to it" (p. 333). Note well that this is only a remedy to be applied in a completely hopeless case; and then I consider a third hypothesis, "a return to true and normal intellectuality, which, instead of being imposed and constrained, or at most accepted and suffered from outside, would then be carried out voluntarily and as it were spontaneously." This other solution, which I declare the best if it is

possible, it is nothing other than the return of the West to its own tradition.  
So how have I changed my mind since the time I was writing this?

On the other hand, I have always considered that all traditions, whether Eastern or Western, have an identical background in various forms; it is therefore not a question of making an "attempt at association" between these traditions (which are more than two), but of becoming aware of their essential unity, and also of the reasons for their external differences.

As for Atlantis and Hyperborea (this one by the way is much more important than that one when you really want to go back to the origins), if I hadn't talked about them yet, it's quite simply that I haven't had the chance; there is, however, an allusion to these things in the "Introduction" (pp. 45-46). What I know about it comes mainly from India: M. Le Cour is therefore very wrong, from his own point of view, to slander Oriental traditions, which are perhaps Oriental only. in the present state of earthly humanity. The question of this present state and that of origins must be carefully distinguished; I believe, however, that I have explained myself quite clearly on this on several occasions.

As for claiming that I am unaware of such or such things or that I have "not yet found them", what can M. Le Cour really know? I don't feel at all obligated to let him know the data I'm working on, nor to say all at once everything I know (and perhaps there are many things I don't). will never write). He can also say that I am unaware of his linguistic discoveries, because, considering them as pure fantasies, I would be careful not to take them into account. As for his forecasts, he is certain that he has a presentiment of something, and he is not the only one at present; but, if it is a question of being precise, I believe that I would find it difficult to agree with him, and I doubt very much that the true cyclic laws are known to him.

Here are some very long reflections on this letter from M. Le Cour; you can answering him, inspire you insofar as you deem fit.

These ladies send you their fondest memories, and I, dear Sir and friend, I Please always believe in my most cordial sentiments.

RG

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Paris, October 18,  
1927. 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir and friend It

has already been a fortnight since we returned to Paris; we have, so far, better weather than that which we enjoyed (so to speak) during the holidays; Did it get better for you too?

M. Buron wrote to me from Mettray to ask for the address of M. de Frémond, to whom he wanted to send some copies of the October issue containing his poetry; he was, he told me then, to be back here on the 28th of September; I haven't had any further news since.

Thank you for having communicated to me the passages of the letters of Fr. Anizan concerning me; you had more luck than Mr. Chauvet, who, having made various allusions to my works in writing to him, did not obtain the slightest answer on this subject, which makes him doubt that Fr. Anizan knows the said works. . It seems to me, moreover, that in what you are quoting me, there are many vague phrases, as vague as the last letter I received at Loudun, and to which I must tell you that I did not replied, finding it perfectly useless to continue a discussion beside the question (I told Abbé Buron as much when sending him the information he was asking for). I see that this "criterium" thing keeps coming up, as in the letter from Abbé Martin that I communicated to you; I don't want to let myself be drawn into this "philosophical" terrain, which, for me, is completely pointless; it would be a waste of time, and I prefer to occupy myself with more interesting things. On the subject of philosophy, I have noticed, in the last articles of Fr. Anizan, a quite extraordinary change: he now quotes St. Thomas almost in every sentence; and, when I remember certain reflections he used to make to me, it seems to me that he is no longer the same man. I don't know if this change of attitude was imposed on him, or if it is only the fear of the difficulties that could be caused to him that makes him act like this. In any case, if he finds that I see too much of the influence of Maritain et Cie in all this, it is because he is not, as I am, aware of all the schemes of these people- there, which is nicknamed here "the band of Meunier".

I was very surprised to see, in the last issue of "Regnabit", the letter written more than a year ago by my friend Faugeron to Father Anizan to thank him for his article on "Psyché". ; why are we releasing this letter after so long?

What do you think of the Glozel affair and all the discussions to which it gives rise at the moment? I would be happy to have your opinion on this; it seems to me that "official" prejudices play a certain role in this story. Whatever the solution, if ever there is one, the diversity of the hypotheses put forward sufficiently shows how wrong it would be to trust the so-called results of a certain science...

Has Mr. Foussier finally decided to come to Loudun?

I recently had to correct the proofs of my next book; I was surprised that the printers went so fast this time, because it is quite contrary to their habits; I therefore think that the volume will be able to appear next month.

Do you have views of the sculptures of the St Sauveur de Dinant church? It was Genty who asked me to ask you this question; he told me he had some set aside for you, in case you didn't have any.

Did you send Fr. Hoffet a response to his daunting inquiry? I haven't done it yet; I'll have to take care of that these days. It is curious that he used exactly the same formula for both of us; however, I believe that if our articles had not really interested him, he would have said nothing at all.

Did you do the work that Don Leclercq asked of you for his dictionary?

The end of your article on the ram seems very good to me; what you say about the symbolism of the horns is quite correct; this point could, moreover, give rise to many developments. Horned helmets are found everywhere,

all the way to Japan, and they certainly have the meaning you indicate.

Best memories of all, dear Sir and friend, and my very cordial feelings.

RG

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Paris, June 8,  
1928. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Very dear sir and friend I

have long intended to reply to your letter, which is almost two months old; I haven't been able to find the time so far. I constantly had, not to mention courses and lessons, hurried and quite boring work: first an English translation of "Man and His Future", which had been so badly done that there was misinterpretations on every page, and that I had to redraft it from cover to cover, which I believe gave me about as much trouble as if I had had to do it myself- even. Moreover, the publishers, instead of submitting the manuscript to me as I thought, had it first composed and only sent me proofs; they were frightened of the additional costs that the corrections were going to cause them (yet it was their fault), and I had some difficulty in making them understand the need for the said corrections; they ended up bowing all the same. As soon as that was finished, I had to start preparing supplements for "Theosophism", which is out of print and will be reissued very soon, and which needed to be brought up to date with events that have occurred since the first edition; the composition of this having been preserved, it was not necessary to touch the text, but only to add a kind of appendix, in the form of a series of notes referring to the passages which they are intended to complete; this work, while not seeming very important, required me a lot of research, and I was only able to finish it last week.

It was indeed Madame Lurreau (?) who wrote me the story that you know, but it was not Monsieur Le Cour who actually told it to her, she told me since, in another letter, that she had it from a priest of your friends; maybe you can guess who it is.

We very much regretted that you were unable to come to Blois during the Easter holidays, since you were so close to it, firstly because it would have given us the pleasure of seeing you, and then because I could have explained many things to you more easily and completely than in writing.

Shortly after our return here, one of my correspondents from the South, Dr. Peyre, communicated to me letters which Father Anizan had addressed to him, and which contained new proofs the truth, in particular by claiming that his questions had been provoked by my response to his communication to the Committee. Thereupon, feeling that I now knew everything I wanted to know and that it was time to put an end to a story that had already wasted too much of my time, I sent in my resignation with reasons, not only of the Committee, but of the very society of "Intellectual Radiation". I

think, moreover, that you were also aware of this last part of our correspondence, because I asked Fr. Anizan to communicate the said correspondence in full to all the members of the Committee. You see that I only partially followed your advice, because, far from finding it preferable that my resignation go unnoticed, I want on the contrary that we know the real reasons; my case is in no way comparable to that of M. Thomas, and my intellectual situation does not allow me to suggest that it is.

There is one thing in your letter which is quite correct: you say that "we do not speak the same language"; Dr. Peyre, for his part, wrote me exactly the same thing. Only, the question of the true nature of the Eastern spiritual centers, which Fr. Anizan completely ignores, seems to me to be, contrary to what you think, the most important question in all this, and even the only essential one; if he had been able to understand that these centers have absolutely no connection with the religious point of view, he would not have written to me all the more or less incoherent things that he wrote to me. Moreover, even in your letter, I still find, allow me to tell you, a trace of the same ambiguity, because you speak at a time of "religious truth", whereas, for me, it is not at all of what it is, but truth without epithet, outside of any special form, religious or otherwise; religious truth must not be confused with total truth, and it is this confusion that is the real cause of all misunderstanding.

It is understandable, of course, that the PP. Anizan has to take precautions with regard to the publication he directs, since he is subject to the authority of people who, on many things, are ignorant and incompetent (I remember what you wrote last summer about the censor of Reims); but these precautions, if he had to take them with regard to me, he had to do it before asking my collaboration, and before inscribing me automatically in his Committee; I never solicited anything from him, and, consequently, I kept all my independence vis-à-vis him and his organization; moreover, if he had told me that my membership would involve some commitment on my part, I would have declined his offers purely and simply. He showed, in all respects, a complete misunderstanding of the real situation; by virtue of what could he have imagined having a sort of right of control over me? When I clarified things that embarrassed him, he was careful not to answer them, and he thought he got away with throwing at me the word "errors or the like, as if that could impress me! You have to believe that he hardly knows me; I don't know exactly what kind of people he is used to dealing with, but what is certain is that they are people with whom I have nothing in common. In short, in his letters, I found nothing but reasoning proving his ignorance of what it was all about (I could not even manage to make him understand that philosophy did not interest me and was for me a non-existent thing), threats that could not reach me, and, especially towards the end, rather base insults; all this is truly childish, and it would be rather laughable if it weren't sad enough to have to witness such a mentality.

You say that Fr. Anizan asked me to "specify an intellectual and religious position"; I see here two things which should be very clearly distinguished. As for my intellectual position, which cannot be explained in any line, I

know how to specify it better than I have done in my books; only, to know it, it would be necessary to read these, including the properly doctrinal books, and above all to understand them, which I do not think Father Anizan is capable of, nor perhaps any theologian. As for my religious position, I don't have to have one, since, as I told you earlier, I don't place myself at that point of view.

It may be that, as you say, Fr. Anizan is not directly involved in certain intrigues, but is nevertheless influenced by people who are involved in them. Those of my friends here to whom I had the opportunity to show our correspondence (and among them priests) were unanimous in thinking that the attitude he adopted was imposed on him; I like that better for him, because he has been, in a way, in this whole affair, only an irresponsible instrument. Besides, I know too much about the way things happen in certain ecclesiastical circles to be surprised; and I would even add that, on the "Roman centre", as Father Anizan says, without claiming to be completely informed, I know many things that he himself certainly does not know. Besides, it's not that I'm especially interested; but I cannot prevent people from coming to tell me certain stories, which I content myself with recording in my memory for purely documentary purposes; if you knew, for example, all the very edifying things that various priests and religious have told me about the Index! The conclusion that emerges from all this is very simple: there are things that must impress the masses, and I would even say that it must necessarily be so, but...

Cicero said long ago that two augurs could not look at each other without laughing; it seems that it is still exactly the same today. This entirely between us, of course, because, unless absolutely forced to, I don't want to get involved in things which, after all, don't concern me; I believe that everyone should be master at home and in their own domain, and it is only if they claim to encroach on mine (I say "mine" to make myself understood) that I should have to put it in order; I confess to you, moreover, that I would prefer not to have to do so; but, whatever happens, the imprudent would only have themselves to blame. You will perhaps have some opportunity to make this known, at least indirectly, to people whom it may affect, since in certain Catholic circles they do not seem to have even the elementary prudence (which the theosophists and vulgar spiritualists) to be wary of what I may have in store. There is even this very curious thing: the people of various categories to whom I told very harsh truths kept quiet; Catholicism is the only thing in the present Western world which I have sympathized with and declared respectable, and Catholics are also, so far, the only ones who have insulted and threats. We can conclude what we want; for my part, I conclude from this above all that Westerners, taken collectively, are "possible" only when they are shown the stick... Besides, I see no appreciable difference between the spirit of domination which asserts itself through the letters of Fr. Anizan and the one who presides over the colonial conquests; How little "spiritual" is all this!

Another thing: Fr. Anizan always let me ignore the criticisms addressed to my last articles of "Regnabit", he did not even have the elementary

frankness in telling me about it (any more than he had the no less elementary courtesy to wait for my resignation to make me remove the service of "Regnabit"); without, I <sup>YOU</sup> would still be unaware of their existence, and I see, moreover, that it is not through him that you yourself learned of them. Similarly, I had some difficulty in getting him to admit that it was the "Crisis of the Modern World" that had triggered his attack, and he was careful not to tell me that he was echoing certain criticisms theologians; I suspected it right away, and besides, I really don't care, because I can't be touched by criticisms that are necessarily false; but what torturous procedures! You must remember, moreover, that I will not waste my time discussing with a few more or less anonymous theologians, firstly because I am completely convinced of the uselessness of discussion in general, then because that I don't have to let myself be drawn into a terrain that has nothing in common with that where I place myself, and finally because there are things which, by their very nature, are and must remain above any discussion. As I have never asked anything of anyone, no one has anything to demand of me either; and, as the considerations I am expounding relate to a properly "initiatory" point of view, people will have to resign themselves, willy-nilly, to contenting themselves with what I judge appropriate to tell them. I will always be ready to explain myself on certain things with those who will be qualified, if there are any, but with those only, and on the condition that they give me proof that they are in possession of effective knowledge; This is, I beg you to believe, something quite different from philosophical theological arguments. I am sure that the theologians who dabble in criticizing me would not last long on this ground; and without looking any further, I would like to see what they would answer, for example, if I asked them certain precise questions on the "power of the keys". ... But let's leave that; it may very well be, after all, that what has happened is only a manifestation of the untimely zeal of a few subordinates, and that one is not disposed, in high places, to be carried away by them. in more or less unfortunate adventures; Personally, again, I don't care much, but it may be of interest to know just how far modern decadence has come. In any case, this story is the finest confirmation of everything I have written; besides, I don't know why my last book aroused such an explosion of fury, because, in short, it contains nothing very different from what is already to be found in the preceding ones. If I made certain warnings heard, it was because I had to do so, without having any illusions about the result; free to those to whom they are addressed not to take them into account, it is their business and it is no longer mine.

I am still thinking of your Mazdean visitor; Would it have occurred to you to ask him, before entering into conversation with him, if he recognized the "absolute supremacy of the Roman center" in all areas? This very idea would certainly have seemed absurd to you; it is just as difficult to want to ask myself such a question. All this only makes me regret a little not having adopted, to sign my writings, an oriental name, which would have been very easy for me, and which would have had the advantage of cutting short in advance any intervention more or less absurd.

Now I see in this matter, as I wrote to Fr. Anizan, a

"experience" that I don't regret, because it was worth having; but once is enough, and henceforth I shall keep myself carefully aloof from all such circles; it is very probable that they will no longer call on my collaboration, but even if they did, I would refuse without any hesitation.

I apologize for the length of these explanations; if I thought I had to give them to you, it's because of the great esteem I have for you, and because they can be of use to you on occasion to set certain things straight. I have only one regret, that of no longer being able to follow your work; all the rest, as you can imagine, is perfectly indifferent to me.

I was recently asked a question that I could not answer exactly: when did we begin to depict Christ on the cross? You will be very kind to give me this little information, because it is something that you surely know.

My aunt and Françoise ask me to send you their best memories, and I, dear sir and friend, please always believe in my very cordial feelings.

RG

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Blois, August 25,  
1928. 74, rue du Foix.

Dear Sir and friend,

About a week ago, so very shortly before your letter, I indeed received one from my brother-in-law inviting me to go to Loudun this week, which fact impossible, as I replied immediately; we were therefore in a little too much of a hurry, as I see, to announce my arrival to you. On the other hand, I am also invited to go to Champigny; according to a letter received this very morning, it could only be around September 15; but at this time, that is to say after the opening of the hunt, will they still be able to receive me at Loudun? I don't know, anyway, it wasn't possible for me to make two trips, and even, to tell the truth, I'm still very hesitant and I wonder what I'm going to do. Indeed, not to mention the difficulty of arranging everything with everyone to make the dates coincide, this trip will be rather painful for me this year... Moreover, my aunt, who was feeling better since we were here, was once again ill last week and hasn't been very famous since, so I wonder if it would be wise to leave her alone. In any case, even if everything worked out, you can count on it not until about the middle of September, certainly not before; I wanted to tell you without further delay, so that you can have your time between now and then. I too would be happy to see you again and talk with you about many things.

I learned that your congress, the program of which you sent me, was very successful and very interesting; congratulations.

No, I haven't seen that article against Cocteau you're telling me about; I only know, in a somewhat vague way, that a book appeared a month or two ago which caused a lot of noise (I couldn't remember the name of the author, who was quite unknown) and which must have been the cause of this article. Anyway, as for

from Maritain, it seems that he found a way to dissociate himself from Cocteau on this occasion; the ease with which he changes his attitude is quite extraordinary. But there is something else that must have been a much harder blow for him: the condemnation of the "Friends of Israel" by Rome a few months ago: have you heard of it?

A few days before we left Paris, I saw Dom Leclercq getting on a tram in front of Saint-Germain des Prés; do you expect to have his visit again this year?

Would it be possible for you to give me the information that I had asked you for in my last letter, about the time when Christ was first depicted on the cross? That would be of service to me, because, having nothing precise on this subject, I have not yet been able to give this indication to the correspondent who had asked me for it.

It appears that M. Le Cour is again in Crete; he is very lucky to be able to afford such trips. I observe from time to time that he seizes on all the pretexts to make allusions to my works which seek to be disparaging; it's a real obsession. As you can imagine, I don't care much, and he is mistaken if he imagines that I am going to waste my time answering him (that is perhaps what he would like); it will only be necessary, when I have the opportunity, that I cut short the affirmation that he repeats everywhere and according to which I would have spoken of a "Hyperborean Atlantis", which is something somewhat comparable to a "round square"; let him take the West for the North if he wants, but let him not attribute his confusions to me!

I'd be glad to know where your research is at; do you always find new things ?

Believe, I beg you, dear sir and friend, in my very cordial sentiments.

RG

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Paris, November 9,  
1928. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir and friend I

hope you will excuse me for being so late with you; as a result of the new misfortune that has just befallen me, I find myself in the presence of all sorts of organizational difficulties, and obliged to take care of many things for which I am very little suited. You see that the fears that my poor aunt's health inspired in me already during the holidays were in no way exaggerated; it was really impossible for me to leave her alone. I deeply regret not having been able to see you, especially since now I have no idea what will happen next. If only I were sure of keeping Françoise with me, we would manage to sort things out; but her mother shows the intention of taking her back, without worrying about what I might become if I remain completely isolated in this way.

After what we did, I was far from expecting this; there are incredible and extremely painful things; naturally, I ask you to keep this to yourself.

Thank you for your information on the date of the appearance of the Crucifix, which I communicated to the correspondent who had asked me for it; That's pretty much what I thought, but I didn't have enough details.

What you have been told about an offensive by certain French ecclesiastical circles against everything to do with the Orient does not surprise me at all, and even to tell the truth, this offensive has already begun a long time ago; what happened to me with "Regnabit" is basically just one manifestation of that. Only, I don't know if the appointment of Father Pinard de la Boullaye to the chair of Notre-Dame has anything to do with these maneuvers; I have not heard of him in this sense apart from what you told me in your letter, and, having never read any of his publications, I am completely unaware of his attitude in this respect; I only feel some "a priori" distrust of any "historian of religions" whoever he may be. If by any chance you had clearer information, you would do me a favor by letting me know.

In the same vein, a few months ago (I believe it was in June), there was a quite extravagant article in the "International Review of Secret Societies": after some insinuations about of my last book, there was denounced a great plot formed between the Jesuits and the Jews to have the seat of the Papacy transferred to Jerusalem, while waiting to transport it even further to the East; and what's funniest is that Maritain was designated as one of the main agents of the plot! It is certainly his estrangement with Massis which is the cause, but all the same I did not expect such a story; it would be laughable if it were not so lamentable to see such nonsense spread in Catholic magazines and find credit in certain circles.

I was told recently that you had published a very interesting article on the Sphinx; if you still have a copy available, you would give me great pleasure by sending it to me; I hope this request will not be too indiscreet.

You should know that Mr. Le Cour is going to donate in the collection of the "Cahiers du Portique", a volume on "Crete and its mysteries"; I'm curious to see what

it will be. As for what you were suggesting for a clarification on my part, he might indeed agree to insert it into "Atlantis", but I will tell you very frankly that I prefer to stay away entirely and give no pretext for the establishment of direct relations between him and me; I have many reasons for this. I will find a way or another, in a book or in an article, to say a few words about this so-called "Hyperborean Atlantis", without it taking on more importance than it should.

About "Atlantis", what do you think of the question of the Triple Enclosure? This morning I received a letter from M. Florance, to whom I had communicated your brochure on the Heart of Chinon on this subject, which he did not know and which interested him greatly; he would like to be fixed on the meaning of this symbol. Don't you have any idea about that? For my part, I have one that I will tell you next time.

Please always believe, dear sir and friend, in my very cordial feelings.

RG

I heard that Mr. Lévrier had left Loudun to return to Poitiers; has he already given up his study? It seems to me that he had had it for a very short time.

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Paris, November 25,  
1928. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir and friend

Mr. Grolleau informed me these days that there was, in the last published volume of the "Literary History of Religious Sentiment" by Abbé Brémond, a note in which you were quoted. I have taken a copy of this note, and I am sending it to you in case you have not yet seen it.

I believe you have received the letter I wrote to you some time ago.

I've had the flu quite badly for about a week, and it's very annoying when you have to drive around all the same; but that's nothing compared to all the worries I alluded to the other time; you think if I can work under such conditions!

Sincerely yours

RG

.....

Paris, January 11,  
1929. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear sir and friend

It's been a long time since I heard from you; I think you have received my last letters, and in particular the one in which I sent you a

quote about you; but no doubt you are always overloaded with work and this is the cause of your silence. However, I do not want to delay any longer in sending you my best wishes for the New Year, and even then they will be already well overdue.

I like to believe that your health is better than mine, for the latter always leaves much to be desired; I've had this kind of flu for about two months now that I can't get rid of. It is true that the weather is unfavorable, but the troubles I had and still have certainly had a lot to do with the persistence of this state; We may want to hold on despite everything, but the body's resistance unfortunately has limits.

I was finally able to read your article on the Sphinx, a friend who had obtained it having lent it to me; I found it very interesting, as I had been told, and I admire that you can pass on certain things, and in particular certain quotations, without attracting the quarrels of a censorship that is all the more suspicious because she is more unintelligent. I will only allow myself, about this article, a small remark: why do you say that "the ancients knew little about the Divinity", that "they conceived it as best they could"? I want to believe that this is only a sort of oratorical precaution on your part, simply intended to make the rest more easily accepted.

I was unable to learn anything about what you told me about the appointment of Father Pinard de la Boullaye to the chair of Notre-Dame; on your side, did you have any other information on that?

You no doubt know that M. Le Cour announces a work on the "Cretan Mysteries", which will no doubt appear in the "Cahiers du Portique"; I wonder how he will deal with this issue. About Mr. Le Cour, do you have any idea about the story of the "Triple Enclosure" which I told you about in a previous letter?

The new edition of "Theosophism", brought up to date with recent events as I believe I told you, appeared last month.

I was truly amazed these days when I learned that Dom Leclercq had just published a work by Rieder on the primitive Christian life. Two or three years ago, I refused to give anything to this house, whose tendencies are too well known; I see that not everyone has the same scruples.

Françoise sends you her best memories, and I, dear Sir and friend, please always believe in my very cordial sentiments.

RG

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Paris, January 30,  
1929. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear sir and friend

But no, I did not receive your previous letter; there are many who are losing right now, and I've had the opportunity to see it several times.

I was very surprised at the news you broke to me; I didn't know anything at all, and besides, since the troubles I got into about Françoise, we've been

hardly any news from the family. I did not imagine at all, I confess, such a change in your life; I pray that the consequences will be happy for you. It is certain, in any case, that you will be less isolated; it is sometimes very painful to feel alone, I know something about it now, alas!

... I am happy to know that you have to come and live so close to Paris, because I do hope that we will have the pleasure of seeing you from time to time.

Thank you for kindly sending your article on the Sphinx, which reached me almost at the same time as your letter; if it is possible for you to send me also the one of which you speak, on the dove, when it appears, that will give me great pleasure.

So the censorship of "Regnabit" is changed? Otherwise, I would not understand what you say this time on this subject, so much it is different from what you wrote to me during the refusal of my article. Be that as it may, it is to be greatly congratulated that you are allowed such freedom. As for me, the experience was enough for me, and, for the future, I am determined never again to submit anything of what I write to the appreciation of ignorant and incompetent (and the censors in question necessarily are all with regard to Eastern doctrines and, more generally still, all questions of an esoteric or initiatory order).

For the publication of Dom Leclercq's book by Rieder, it may indeed be that, as you say, there are hidden reasons, let's say "diplomatic" if you like; it is none the less true that this produced a rather unfortunate impression on many people.

The figure of the Triple Enclosure was in fact preserved until the Middle Ages, like many other ancient symbols; there is at least (?) an example of it in your brochure on the Heart of Chinon. For me, the three enclosures simply represent three degrees of initiation; this is a very widespread symbolism in the most diverse times and places. As for the circle within the square, it undoubtedly has multiple meanings, but it seems above all to be a figure of the "Anima Mundi"; I even wonder if there might not be some indication in this respect in Plato's "Timaeus", but naturally my memories are not precise enough for me to be able to affirm it.

I have indeed already thought of an English translation of "Theosophism", but so far it has not succeeded; we should also try to get it published in America, because it would be very difficult in England, because of the political support (and especially the police) that these people enjoy.

I like to believe that your health is always good; here, thanks to the awful wet weather we have, there are flus at every door. It seems to me, however, that I am a little better, or rather a little less badly, but the difference is not yet very noticeable.

Best memories of Françoise. Yours very cordially.

RG

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Paris, February 8,  
1929. 51, rue St Louis en l'Île (IVe)

Dear Sir and friend

Many thanks for sending your two articles on the dove, which, this time again, reached me about the same time as your letter, and which I read with great interest, like you can think so. For the passage that you pointed out to me in particular, I see that you did a very good job of getting the thing accepted, which otherwise could indeed have raised difficulties. I must tell you, however, that I believed that the conception which presents the Holy Spirit as feminine and which, consequently, identifies him with the Blessed Virgin (or which rather presents the latter as an earthly manifestation of the Holy Spirit), was well enough known, for it is found in certain Gnostic schools, and also, it seems, among the Albigenses. There are still, outside of what you are talking about, people who support this theory; I knew a brave lady, a little extravagant, who thought she had the mission of getting her accepted by Rome, and who bored all the priests of Paris with this story. What is certain is that the dove is indeed, among all peoples, a feminine symbol; but it could be argued, on the contrary, that the Holy Spirit is also symbolized by fire, an essentially active or masculine element.

What you say about certain organizations is very curious; but I think we should distinguish between those that are only mystical and those that have a truly initiatory character, because the former are much less interesting than the latter. In the case of the "Internal Estoile", is it sure that it really dates back to the 15th century by an uninterrupted filiation? I have known groups which were also in possession of authentically old documents, and which used them to present themselves as the legitimate continuation of the organizations from which these documents emanated; but, after verification, it turned out that these had been picked up anywhere, so that there was nothing founded in these claims. This is what leads me to some mistrust, perhaps quite unjustified, moreover, in the case in question.

For the symbol of the triple enclosure, it is certain that there is, in addition to what I told you the last time, a meaning relating to the three worlds; but it is, moreover, closely linked to the one that I indicated to you. Indeed, the degrees of initiation (when it is a question of real initiation, of course) are everywhere and always put in correspondence with certain states, which are represented as so many worlds. Dante's symbolism of the heavens is based on the same principle; it should even be noted in this connection that, in India, the planetary circles are sometimes represented as so many concentric enclosures surrounding the Meru. The truly initiatory meaning is indefinitely multiple, one could say, and, because of the correspondences that it entails, it includes all the others without ever being limited to them; it is in this way that it has no common measure with profane interpretations (I take this last word in the sense that one could call "technical").

Dom Leclercq's book, published by Rieder, is entitled "Primitive Christian Life"; the most extraordinary thing is that it was Couchoud(?) himself who did the press service!

Thinking about it carefully, I think you were right to decide to leave

your isolation; it is certain, in fact, that one can never count much on the family; do you still have any, while I no longer have any on my side.

I still hope to be able to keep Françoise, despite the incredible persecution to which I am subjected. ; without that, I don't know what would become of me, being quite unfit to concern myself with the material organization. She has changed a great deal in recent times, and you will have some difficulty in recognizing her. We will surely go to see you at Orly, and we hope that you will also come here sometimes.

Please believe, dear Sir and friend, in my very cordial sentiments.

RG

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Paris, March 18,  
1929. 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear sir and friend As

I made a few allusions in writing to you about my serious family troubles, I must let you know what has just happened. After stalking me for several months with incredible ingratitude and wickedness (it would be too long and uninteresting to tell you, even summarily, all the phases through which this affair passed), my miserable sister-in-law made burst in here last Wednesday and abducted his daughter in absolutely appalling conditions. I learned things that go beyond anything you can imagine: I was surrounded without suspecting it, by a real network of espionage and betrayal. The most frightening thing is that the child herself was playing a double game: while she protested every day that she wouldn't leave me, that she cared? ? ? with me, she wrote to her mother, without my knowledge, letters intended to serve in case of need and in which she said that she wanted to go with her. There were people who broke into my house in my absence and made him write these letters; but all the same, at his age, one must know what one says and what one does. Also, now that I know all this, I would not want any more of it at any price; I can truly say that I fed a viper. It would be a relief to be delivered from all this ignominy, if the situation did not appear to me to be almost insoluble from a material point of view; but everything is preferable to this abjection. I feel a disgust and disgust beyond anything you can imagine.

Everything was engineered with truly infernal skill, it was arranged in such a way as to make it impossible for me to act. Naturally, I no longer want to have any connection with this family which, in gratitude for all that we have done, has allied itself against me, and resorting to infamous methods.

I wanted to tell you these things, first because I consider you a true friend, and also because, as you know this family, it is good that you know what is going on; above all, I urge you never to speak to them about me.

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This case made me sick once again; Thursday morning I found myself completely speechless, and it's only just beginning to happen; I don't know if my organism will be able to resist all these assaults. When I think of everything I've had to go through anyway for a little over a year, I'm surprised to still be here.

I think you have received my last letter; are you going to come to our region soon? I will be very happy to be able to see you again sometimes, especially since it will now be impossible for us to meet in Loudun.

Please always believe, dear sir and friend, in my very cordial sentiments.

RG

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Paris, March 30,  
1929. 51, rue St Louis en l'Ile (IVe)

Dear Sir and friend I

think that my last letter, in which I told you what happened to me, has reached you despite the fancies of the post office, which misleads many at the moment. Besides, that is not why I am writing to you again today, at the risk of being importunate, for you must have many other preoccupations; it is to inform you of something which concerns you in part and of which, without attaching excessive importance to it, I believe it is good that you should be informed.

I have been shown these days one of the last issues of the "Revue Internationale des Sociétés Secrètes", which is falling more and more into stories à la Léo Taxil, and which publishes an extravagant article against M. Le Cour, accused to be the outside agent of an organization called AÿAÿ (Adepts of Atlantis) and led by a certain Aleister Crowley. I probably know this much better than the author of the article; and Aleister Crowley is a most disreputable character, who was imprisoned in England during the war as a German spy; but he is above all a hoax and a crook, much more than the representative of any "occult power". As for Mr. Le Cour's attachment to the organization in question, I believe absolutely nothing about it, and that seems to me quite simply grotesque. can't we talk about Atlantis without knowing Aleister Crowley? There are however many others, starting with Plato, who spoke about it before him!

But there is something else, and this is where I was going: the article ends with a treacherous insinuation directed against the two of us, against you because one of your files was reproduced in "Atlantis", and against me because people find that this publication gives me a lot of publicity! Now you know that, if M. Le Cour indeed often speaks of me, it is not to advertise me, but on the contrary to attack me wrong and through, since he has the fixed idea to want to see in me an "adversary", although I never cared about him. I have just had yet another proof of this fad: to inaugurate his "Cahiers d'Atlantis", he felt the need to republish the two articles which he had formerly published in the "Nouvelle Revue", and in which he lends me sentences that I have never written; he attached a letter also aimed at me and addressed to Dr Delobel, editor of the "Voile d'Isis", without, moreover, following it up with the latter's answer, who put things back to the point in a very just.

I return to the article of the RISS; there is, as far as you are concerned, a sentence? ? ? : "there would be a lot to say on this subject" (I do not guarantee the exact terms but it is the meaning), which suggests that we may not stop there. I

suppose this must be an allusion to some of the things contained in your recent "Regnabit" articles, and in particular to what you said there of various mysterious organizations; there would be nothing surprising in this being used to also present you as an affiliate of I don't know what more or less diabolical companies. You never know what may come out of this pharmacy; for me, who am completely independent, this is quite indifferent to me, but it could be more embarrassing for you; anyway, you have been warned.

Either these people are completely in bad faith, or they are dangerous lunatics; I still prefer M. Le Cour's infatuations, which are more harmless!

My health is hardly recovering; there are times when I'm so tired that I don't can't even read.

Don't answer me if you don't have time, I wouldn't blame you; but send me a simple word to tell me that you have received my letters, because with all that is being lost at the moment, one is never very reassured.

When you leave Loudun, which must be soon, I hope you Don't forget to give me your new address.

Always believe, dear sir and friend, in my most cordial sentiments.

RG

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Paris, April 11, 1929.  
51, rue St Louis en l'Île (Ive)

Dear Sir and friend, I received your two letters, the first of which crossed mine. Of course, your delay is fully excused; thank you for your sympathy.

For the moment, I manage to sort things out with the help of the housekeeper we already had before my aunt's death; I try not to think too much about what might happen next. However, there are all kinds of questions which it is very difficult for me not to concern myself with: thus, I will be forced to go to Blois on vacation, if only for a short time, and I do not know at all how it will be possible for me to get out of trouble. Everything is more complicated for me than for anyone else, because I understand nothing about material organization. And then, what makes the situation even more worrying, is my health which is still not recovering; my fatigue is such that it is impossible for me to work, apart from? ? ? indispensable and moreover without any interest; how long will this last?

Françoise's attitude was particularly painful to me, as you can imagine: I would never have believed her capable of such falsehood. It is certain that she was influenced, but, all the same, that does not excuse her. I have learned many more things which prove his ingratitude and lack of heart; she was really not worthy of interest. Besides, she could not experience here this feeling of isolation of which you speak, because many people took care of her and contrived to provide her with distractions. She must be boarding now; she will find a change, and no doubt regret what she has lost, but it is too late; I do not know

even how, with her character, she will be able to bear this. Besides, I am completely uninterested in it; I wouldn't want any more at any price, because I don't need spies in my house; I would be much calmer that way without the material difficulties, and also without the fear of falling completely ill; finally it will happen what can. I would like all the more to be in a position to resume my work soon since the main aim of the people who carried out all this is precisely to make it impossible for me to continue it.

A few days ago I received the beginning of the proofs of the book which I had finished in August, and which had all kinds of delays; I hope it will appear next month.

I learned yesterday from Mario Meunier that M. Le Cour had had knowledge of the famous article of which I spoke to you; it seems that he is absolutely furious, which is not surprising. As I predicted, he is particularly indignant at the fact that he is attributed with the intention of advertising, and also at the fact that he is claimed to be attached to a so-called Masonic organization (I say "so-called because it does not have this character in reality, but the RISS claims it to be so for the purposes of its thesis).

Even if you did collaborate on "Atlantis", it seems to me that it is nobody's business, the same for the way in which you may have obtained certain information which is certainly better than much of that of R.

ISS, where there are errors and confusions at every moment (but are they really involuntary?). You are absolutely right to say that it is impossible, for symbolism, not to take account of secret groupings; but these people want to monopolize certain issues and cast suspicion on all those who deal with them outside of them. I understand your point of view very well; mine is much less "theoretical", to be sure, but, moreover, does not imply attachment to any group whatsoever, especially since this is often quite useless. If I learn anything more, I'll be sure to let you know.

See you soon, I hope dear Sir and friend, and very cordially to you.

RG

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**René Guénon to Jean Tourniac (excerpts)<sup>1</sup>**

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Letter of August 10, 1950

[...] For your group, the modifications of the ritual that you indicate to me seem good to me, and there is only one point, I cannot explain myself clearly: the table being drawn on the ground, how can one to reverse it without erasing it? Even with your sketch, I can't imagine how this is possible. About the plumb line, it is obvious that its position must be central, but it would be difficult to say if this agrees well with the presence of the table, since the arrangement of an operative Lÿ is naturally all different.

On the question of the letter G and the swastika, you will see my article in the July-August issue, for which, moreover, I was still quite late.

Maugy spoke to me in his last letter of the 2nd degree ritual project he is preparing, and he promised to send me a copy soon. From what he told me, it seemed to me that he planned to place the set square on the recipient's chest so that it touched him only by the two points; I pointed out to him that this was surely incorrect and that it actually had to be laid flat, as your figure also indicates. On this one, the upper part of the circumscribed circle does pass through the throat, but I don't understand why you seem to be saying on the other hand that this circle reaches the frontal eye, which is certainly far too high for that. What you say about the position of the heart reminds me of something else: it is said that there is a "subtle heart" which is located symmetrically with respect to the ordinary heart, therefore towards the right side, and which even manifests itself sensitive in certain states. Shri-Râmana made the beats very clearly felt by several people. On the other hand, I do not know exactly what is the origin of the figuration of the heart of Christ in the middle exactly, but I knew from Charbonneau-Lassay that the wound on the side should traditionally be on the right and not on the left, contrary to certain modern representations in which we thought we had to correct what we imagined to be due to the ignorance or clumsiness of people in the Middle Ages!

[...] I am glad to know that you propose to give to "Symbolism" something about "Masonry and exotericism", because there are many things there which are in great need of clarification. Cornéloup's article in a last issue is particularly unfortunate (moreover, it is only the development of what he had already sketched out last year in his report [...] Chapÿ; Clavelle, which is directly in question, gave me an answer which seems very good to me.

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Letter of February 8, 1949

[...] I am happy to know that you will receive the Mastery shortly, which will give you more freedom in every way; I will no doubt have echoes of the

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<sup>1</sup> Ÿ From a copy of a copy... of a typescript.

work that you must do, since you will communicate it to the GŷLŷ, and I would also be interested to see your article which must (or must already have) appeared in the "Symbolism".

What you tell me about the reactions provoked by Fŷ Marty's lecture does not surprise me too much, because it is quite certain that many seem to have still retained this incomprehensible mentality which was, [...] or 30 years ago, that of the vast majority; it is rather thanks to young people that the change we hope for can take place, but it is obvious that this can only be done little by little...

I thank you for what you tell me about the Fŷ Peillon, and, of course, you can be sure that I will keep that to myself. I must say that I have never noticed anything in his letters that could lead me to suspect such an attitude in him, but he is doubtless, as you say, very different when he speaks, and moreover it is probable that anyway he would rather avoid letting me know this way of thinking. Now I wonder, like you, what the reasons may well be; despite everything, there may be a certain degree of incomprehension here, and even the contrary would be astonishing; if it's voluntary, I don't really see what advantage there can be, because that would hardly be explained unless he had [...] his own ideas to put forward, which does not seem to be the case ... Apart from that, I have a somewhat "mixed" impression of him, in the sense that I can't quite figure out exactly what he's looking for, and that [...]there isn't perhaps in him more "erudite" curiosity than real aspiration of another order; but of course, having never seen him, I would not like to be too positive in this respect. It also seems to me that he would willingly have a tendency to "collect" the various rites, if [...] [...] rather to bring about a certain "dispersion".

As for this Fŷ which ended up turning to spiritualism, it is really enough [...] indeed; and unfortunately, it is to be feared that this is not a unique case. It is also certain that there has always been everything in Lyon, the best and the worst, and that the result is a rather troubled psychic atmosphere which one should be wary of.

In GŷOŷ, it is not precisely the formation of a new Lŷ in question, but the transformation of an already existing Lŷ, "Akademos" this [...] judged preferable for avoid some possible difficulties. I had heard of this project long enough; I had thought [...] that it was only a particular idea of Bro.ŷ Corneloup, and I wondered if it would be followed up; but, according to the last news received, it seems that it is now a thing quite decided. About the relationship between the Ark and the Temple, I seem to remember that there must be something in the instructions of the Chosen Coën, but I don't know where to find it; in any case the question would surely be interesting to study a little more closely. I had never thought of what you are pointing out to me for the origin of the word "bauhut", but the etymology that you are considering has nothing implausible about it.

Your interpretation of Master's words is quite accurate; the correct form is "Mah ha-bōneh", which the English form does not really stray too far from, since it

only differs in that the finale has become mu (which can also be explained by an intention to reduce the whole to 3 syllables; the other forms are much more distorted, and that of the French rite is even almost unrecognizable, since it has sometimes been doubted that it could be a Hebrew word! I think that you have done very well to start studying Hebrew; as far as by Fabre d'Olivet, you will surely be able to find a lot of interesting things there, but you have to read it with caution, because not everything is to be accepted without reservations. As for Arabic, there is a lot of resemblance with the Hebrew for the roots, but it is true that the grammar there is much more difficult and more complicated.

You talk about Vulliaud, but do you know his "Jewish Kabbalah"? It is undoubtedly the most serious book on this subject, although it is a little too shaded by discussions which drown out the essential; he intended to write another edition of it, pruning all these "sides", and it is regrettable that, so far at least, he has not done so. I have not seen the book [...] by H. Seruya, but what I have been told about it, and also an article by the same author which I have come across, gives me a completely unfavorable opinion on what is the kabbalistic initiation itself, we can say that it is practically inaccessible...

Regarding an exotericism, for those who want to remain in the Christian tradition, Orthodoxy surely represents the best solution, since the validity of its sacraments is not questioned by anyone. On the contrary there is always some doubt as regards Anglicanism; it is true that it has been trying to remedy this situation for some time, by having its bishops consecrated by Orthodox bishops, but I do not know exactly how far this kind of "regularization" has now extended. There are certainly representatives of hesychasm in the West, but I don't know if there are any who are able to play the role of true spiritual guides, perhaps I will be able to get more precise information. I only know S. Boulgakoff's works through a few quotes and insights, but I have W. Lossky's book, which I find very interesting.

I did not know, from what you had told me previously, that you kept or resumed contact with Armenia (I had even thought that the attitude of this modernist deacon had discouraged you from doing so, but he shouldn't probably attach too much importance to an individual deviation which is probably only an exception). , there must be something, because the various comparisons that you point out to me are really interesting; above all, what you tell me about Saint Gregory the Illuminator, whom I did not know, is very remarkable in this respect. I wonder if we can manage to clarify this question further. Clavelle had also alluded to it some time ago, but he never found the time to give me more explanations on it. He also spoke to me, in one of his last letters, of the Armenian bishop of New York and of the "Symbolism of the Cross"; I may soon have the opportunity to see myself the Fy Missak who reported this to him, because it seems that he intended to stop here during a trip to Africa from South. I was unaware of the existence in Edjmiadzin of a bell bearing the inscription "Om mai dmê hûm (?)"; it must surely come from Tibet,

or at least from some region of Central Asia, but do we know since what Period and as a result of what circumstances it is there?

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Letter of May 19, 1949

[...] Since you now have the Mastery, it is basically the main thing because, strictly speaking, the high degrees are not an integral part of the Maçÿ (which, of course, does not mean that it should be neglected for that). It is surely regrettable, as you say, that the Royal Arch does not exist in France, and you are not the first to remark it; but, unfortunately, I believe that there is practically no way to fill this gap, at least as long as there is no relation between the French Macÿ and the English Macÿ. I am in no way surprised by the unfortunate "neo-spiritualist" tendencies that you observe in certain FFÿ of your Lÿ; I would even say that, in Lyon, it is rather the opposite which would be surprising! I thought, however, that the too famous rite of Memphis-Misraim had been dormant since the war, has it therefore woken up lately?

I read your article in the "Symbolism" of January, and I find this clarification very good and very timely; naturally, I will talk about it in my reports, but there have been so many things all these days are going to be well overdue... In this regard, I must tell you that Marius Lepage, in the last letter that I received from him, told me that he now realized that it was a mistake to call the Church itself an "initiatory organization" as he had done, and that he would have [...] ] not to commit in the future this confusion between the two exoteric and esoteric data; I believe that the said confusion had much to do with the attitude that you criticized in him.

For the question of exoteric connection, it is certain that this requires reflection, and I see moreover that up to now it has not been without [...] for you; I hope that you will finally be able to find a satisfactory solution. In short, in Christianity, the practice of [...] Catholics is excluded, and it is only the Orthodox Church whose "regularity" is indisputable, since, as regards the Anglican Church, there are doubts as to its validity from the point of view of apostolic succession; it is true that, for some time, efforts have been made to remedy this by having Anglican bishops consecrated by Orthodox bishops, but I do not know how far this sort of regularization extends; as long as it is not complete, it is evident that it is much less sure. I must say that not all Catholic priests think like the one you spoke to; I know indeed a Fÿ initiated recently and who, before his initiation, asked the chaplain of an association of engineers to which he belongs what he should do; who replied that he had no need to worry about that, that he had only to continue to practice Catholicism as he always did. He too had considered joining the Orthodox Church if the answer had been negative, but he still preferred to remain in Catholicism if possible. There are in the Orthodox doctrine [...] which are little known in the West, but it seems that currently in certain Catholic circles, we have realized that it was far from being negligible and

that there was every interest in studying these questions from a [...] There are surely also differences in terminology which, like you [...], can be quite embarrassing until you get used to them; it necessarily takes some time and some effort to manage to recognize and establish a correspondence between notions, some of which at least may refer to really different points of view.

The question of "uncreated energies", of which you speak, is far from being [...] clear; the assimilation to "Elohim" that you envisage seems fair to me, but I would not dare to be too affirmative, having never had the opportunity [...] to do this sufficiently. The Tetragrammaton expresses a divine aspect more [...] than Elohim, which, one might say, it somehow contains synthetically and I do not think it is incorrect to equate the GŷAŷ with the Tetragrammaton. I will point out to you, in case you do not know it, W. Lossky's book "Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church", which I find very interesting and which clearly specifies certain differences with the point of view of Christianity. western; the word "mystical" itself does not have the same meaning in [...] and on the other.

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Letter of June 4, 1949

Your impressions on the GŷTŷ, in the present state of things, seem to me quite correct; it is unfortunately certain that the Venŷ, alongside indisputable qualities, also has faults which make it difficult to count on him, not only this individual pride of which you speak but also a kind of "instability" such as we do not know never sure what to expect from him. As for the other founders, there are a certain number of them who seem decidedly lacking in understanding, and it is doubtful that they even manage to realize the aims that are really in view; I do believe that Coën in particular is one of those. We must hope despite everything that the GŷTŷ will manage to maintain itself, but it is sure that this is not enough to do a really serious job, and that we should probably come to consider the constitution of something else for which it could also be used as a recruiting environment. Clavelle had said, although with less detail, what happened to you with [...] Father Kern; I was very surprised, especially since it is hardly possible that he was unaware of the Masonic quality of Mordvinoff, with whom he seems to be very close and who had spoken to me about him some time ago. , about Hesychasmus. Be that as it may, the reasons for his attitude are most likely those which you suppose, particularly with regard to the [...] of the union of the Churches; it is true that this would be very desirable in many respects, as you say, but who knows under what conditions it would be made? What seems to me to be very much to be feared for the Churches is that they would decide to attach themselves to Rome, and you will see presently why, it is that certain promises are not made to them with the intention not hold them. For you, since in spite of everything Father Kern seems to have changed his way of seeing as a result of what you have explained to him, you will certainly do well not to break up, and it is to be hoped that, in spite of these unexpected difficulties, this may still achieve a satisfactory result.

As for the Jesuits of whom he spoke to you, I am convinced, like Clavelle, that it is worth

much better that you do not address yourself; I could say nothing special about Fr. de Lubac; As for P. Danielou, what I had read of him had at first given me a fairly favorable opinion of him, but unfortunately it changed a great deal following the article whose account you will see. - rendered in the "AND" of [...].

Regarding the Syrian and Lebanese FFy belonging to Eastern rites attached to Rome, I must say that the situation is far from clear; practically, they act as if they were unaware of the Maçy ban and some even thought that it should be included among the "exemptions" they enjoy; but information taken, it seems that it does not. By occupying ourselves precisely with this question, we have noticed something much more extraordinary: it is that the privileges which were granted to these Churches at the time of their attachment to Rome, and according to what they had been made to believe, they considered as definitively acquired these [...] have been unworthily deceived! This is so, in particular, for the age of priests, or, to speak more exactly, the ordination of married men (for, as in the Orthodox Church, they had to be married before), then it happened that there were hardly any more candidates for [...] secular (the celibates almost all become monks), so much so that for some time now people have resigned themselves to "closing their eyes" and starting to admit men again married at ordination; I have just learned this from the Fy Risk, from Beirut, who is himself a Melkite, and who recently came to spend a few days here.

What you tell me about the initiation you attended at [...] doesn't surprise me at all, of course there has been some aberration on this side as well, it has so far remained very limited and does not not felt in the whole Obÿ; the Fy Mercier tells me moreover that he has noticed there lately a resurgence of politics which is not very reassuring for those who would like to do something completely different...

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Letter of August 1949 (?)

[...]

As for Fr. Danielou's article, there is certainly some incomprehension on his part, but there must also be another reason, quite "personal": bad humor caused by the attachment of his brother Alain Danielou to the Hinduism!

Maugy told me about the results of your research concerning "[...] de la Roche"; in a new letter more recent than yours which has just arrived, he also tells me that you have seen two medals of [...], both bearing the mention of the same age and the same date [ ...] portrait by Dürer, which seems quite singular... On the other hand, how do you think we can explain the fact that he was buried at night and that his death was kept hidden for several days? It is not astonishing that one does not find in the documents anything which relates directly to an initiatory activity; there can only be certain clues, especially after his relationships; those he maintained with the Reformed particularly preoccupied Maugy, but I must say that Clavelle seemed much less surprised; may

that there were, at the origin of the Reformation, [...] very different from what would lead one to think what it is [...] thereafter. The joke played on the Germans is really amusing; but is there really a statue of JK in Lyon?

I know that there are still Vaudois in Piedmont (the Fy Saverio who was Gÿ Commÿ of the Suprÿ Council of Italy, was a pastor of the Waldensian Church);

but the fact that they somehow rallied to Protestantism seems to indicate that there must have been a certain degeneration among them (I mean doctrinally), although they may still have retained up to some of their old ones now [...]. I no longer remember where I saw the opinion expressed that the Vaudois should have had their origin in a movement of Franciscan inspiration, whose tendencies they simply exaggerated; I cannot say what can be true in that. In any case, I do not think that your requests for information on this side can have serious inconveniences; it seems to me that you will be able to find, if necessary, some plausible reason to give, and that one can always speak simply of historical research (which is moreover true) without specifying more.

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Letter of October 5, 1949

[...] I also thank you in advance for the copy of [...]’s answer that you promise me, because, even if it is not of great interest (which does not surprise me too much), I I’d still be curious to see that. [...] that you are right about the antiquity of their origin, and that it was after the fact that a Franciscan current came to get involved; on the other hand the question of their relations with the Albigenses seems far from being perfectly clear.

Clavelle sent me the text of his work on Elie, and I saw there [...] only about the numerical value of “Om”, which is really curious; on the other hand, he pointed out to me in his last letter that, in addition, there is also the Hebrew word preserved in the Christian liturgy “Alleluia” (hallêlu-Jah), which is indeed correct.

The feeling that you currently have of "parking" is not necessarily something unfavorable, because it may simply be a period of assimilation of what you have previously acquired.

[...] I see that you are still hesitating about the definitive choice of an exotericism, and I understand this only too well; did you get an answer from that Greek Father you met in Paris? I have never had precise information on "French orthodoxy"; could you give me something? All that you explain in what concerns you seems to me on the whole very correct; it seems that there is only the [...] orthodox to be retained, and it is certain that, for one and the other, there are, as you say, both pros and cons. The difficulty arising from the language to be learned is about the same in both cases [...]

.....

Letter of October 30, 1949

[...] I had received your letter of September 26 a little earlier; thank you for all the information it contains about St Jean de Luz which gives me the impression that there must be something really interesting there. The site itself is surely quite significant and I have always wondered if the name "Luz" might have something to do with Hebrew here, or if the Spanish word for "light" is perhaps more likely. The fact that the Church is dedicated to Andrew of Scotland is rather strange, and I don't see how he could explain it apart from a connection with the Orders of Chivalry [...] of the notice which you attached to your letter seems to have [...] focused above all on proving that the Templars could not have been there for [...] but its argument is not very convincing, nor even very [...] chronologically; what does it matter that the enclosure [...] only dates from the second half of the fourteenth century and must therefore be attributed to the Hospitallers [...].

[...] Your remark about the motto "De medietate Lunæ" is really curious ("mediate" does not exist in Latin and is due barbarism [...] and there may indeed be something, although it does not refer quite to the end of the cycle, since, if I remember correctly, there must still be three Popes after the one it designates.

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Letter of January 9, 1950

[...] I see that you have definitely had no luck in your dealings with the Orthodox, both Greeks and Russians; I am always surprised by this attitude which seems to be new among them and whose reasons I do not understand, unless it has some connection with the question of [...] of the Churches [...]

I have just received the December issue of "ET"; I therefore think that you would have been able, for some time already, to have read all of my articles concerning Christianity; You'll probably tell me about it next time. The reflections that you make on this subject agree [...] for the most part with those of which Clavelle has shared with me lately; now that you are in Paris, he can easily communicate to you what is most important in what we have in all this. As a result of the historical research he has undertaken (and which he is still pursuing), he seems to be more and more perplexed [...] the question of the original character of Christianity; and it must be [...] that it is indeed very complex and very difficult. You probably know that we wanted to link primitive Christianity in one way or another to the Essene schools, but the misfortune is that, about the Essenes themselves, we really know very little. In any case, it is at least certain that, so long as Christianity remained within the framework of Judaism, there could be no distinct exoteric law; in these conditions we do not see what it could have been then other than an initiatory path [...] to be must we admit that the "externalization" began as soon as Christianity spread outside the milieu Judaism, therefore very early, since

[...] to be thus in relation especially with the activity of St-Paul himself [...] would explain that one already finds, in the ancient texts, things which hardly seem compatible with an initiatory and esoteric character (baptism children for example, as Clavelle pointed out). It is true that there would still remain, in any case, certain embarrassing passages [...] the very Gospels, such as those of which you speak; [...] the expression "all nations" which sometimes seems to designate all the countries included in Roman memory, and sometimes also only the Jews who were then established in different countries outside Palestine [...]

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Letter of February 9, 1950

[...] I have been very pleased, as you can imagine, with the good news I have had so far of your meetings, and I do hope that you will tell me about them again soon. [...]

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Letter of June 20, 1950

[...] I understand your reservations about the atmosphere of GYTÿ; It's a pity that things didn't take on such a satisfying turn there as we might have hoped, but anyway I believe, for want of anything better, we must all the same continue to do everything possible to maintain the thing . As for the GYLÿ Nationale, which is not without its drawbacks either, it seems to me that it would be too early to make a decision, and that it is better to reserve this for the case where things would come to spoil themselves completely on the other side; Clavelle also comes back to this question in one of his last letters, and [...] try to talk to him about it a little more extensively when answering it. For the 4th degree, everyone told me more or less the same thing, and it goes without saying that I wasn't very surprised; there is only to patent until further notice... [...]

[...] It does seem that the word "triple" in the Royal Arch ritual has sometimes been deformed into "Zebulon" through misunderstanding (I remember in this connection a sentence: "Zebulon is a good mason", but without being able to say where it is); but, in reality, Zebulon is a purely Hebrew name, the [...] and meaning of which are quite different (derived from Zabal, ha [...] to die), and, moreover, there is no d possible assimilation between the letters *Iod* and *Zain*. It is possible that we should also see definitions of the same word in the "Zubelas, Zubelos, zubelum" which are found in certain rituals of the grades of Chosen, and which seem quite insignificant; but one would have to admit that they were then taken completely in the wrong direction, since they were made the names of the three murderers of Hiram; it is probable that by examining these ancient rituals of the high ranks, one would find there [...] other misunderstandings which are hardly less extraordinary than this one.

Regarding my last account of the "Speculative Mason", the ancient Egyptian word for "Being" is *Oun*, which is very close to the Greek *On*, and [...] royal" of Osiris is *Oun nefer*, which literally means "the good being".

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**René Guénon in Maridort**

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Cairo, April 20, 1948.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I received your letter of April 14, with the reviews which accompanied it and for which I thank you.

Chacornac told me in his last letter that the "Grande Triade" was selling much less than "L'Homme et son devenir" (he had already sold 400 copies of it by then) although he had placed an advertisement similar for the 2 volumes in the "Bibliographie de la France"; I don't quite understand what the reasons could be. Finally, so much the better that it still sold 200 copies and that this made it possible to settle part of what remained due to Didry.

As for the price increase of which you speak, there would doubtless be nothing abnormal at present, but of course I cannot account for the effect it would have from the point of view of sales; I ask Allar to examine this question with you, and I trust in advance what you will decide together.

I am very happy to know that your admission to the 3rd degree can take place soon; I do not believe, in fact, that there can be the slightest opposition on the part of A. Coen. I did not think that the initiation of Bouyer and de Taeck should take place so soon; I believe I understand from what you are telling me that it took place in collective clothing; I wonder if this way of proceeding, moreover quite common, could not have some disadvantages, because all the LLÿ are not equally strict from the ritual point of view; for this reason he was not formerly admitted to Thebah.

As far as Cerf is concerned, I see that it's always difficult to know exactly what to expect, and that's a shame, because, in these conditions, you can't entirely count on him; FS (Schuon) gives me some thoughts on this subject which I will transcribe to Clavelle the next time I write to him. I wonder, like you, if he will really end up writing to me; This is another thing that I don't quite understand. As for his return to the Federal Council, it is certain that that would give him more occupations, but I believe like him that it would not be useless, especially from the point of view of the influence that the GÿTÿ can have in a way general in the Obedience.

Thank you for the information concerning 1e Fÿ Nordberg; I'll let Hillel know at the next opportunity. Barquissau definitely seems to be a singular character; wouldn't the former members of Lÿ Agatha have largely passed over to Lÿ Cheops?

I knew that Fÿ Corneloup had had a very favorable impression of his visit to the GÿTÿ, much more than I would have expected, and that he had been especially very struck by the work of Clavelle ; I am therefore not surprised that he wrote to her, but I would be curious to know of this letter.

As for the "Symbolise", I do not believe that Chacornac receives the service, because I remember very well that he did not want to exchange it with the "ET", on the pretext that there is a disproportion between the subscription price of these 2 journals...

Be that as it may, Marius Lepage himself finally sent me a packet containing all the numbers from January 1947 to March 1948; so there are a few that I happen to have in duplicate, and now I only need the one from December 1946, but I don't know if it will be sent to me regularly thereafter.

The communication of the "Peace Committee" testifies to a lack of understanding which does not surprise me too much, because it proceeds from a mentality which is simply that of the great majority of present-day Masons; it is always the preponderance granted to the social point of view which will be for many one of the greatest obstacles to the understanding of things of another order...

I would not have thought that the notice mentioned on the last page of the Bulletin was something distinct from the pamphlet of which Clavelle had spoken to me; it would be good to wish that could also prepare this one as soon as possible, because it will certainly be very useful; Rocco already intends to translate it into Italian.

I am amazed at the story of Sartre which would have its place in the GT; who could well say such an enormity?

I am happy that Maugy has received my letter this faith and also that you have to help him in his work for the Ritual which now seems to have "officially" to fall on Marty alone. There are many questions which deserve to be examined closely, and of course I have only been able, for the moment, to point out to him a few of which I immediately thought of. It is a little surprising that the formula "In the Name of the GYA of the UY did not catch Cerf's attention, because it seems to me that it is far from unimportant.

The correspondence of the Ternary "Wisdom, Strength, Beauty" is indeed always given in this order: Solomon, Hiram y king of Tyr, Hiram-Abi, that is to say Veny, 1st Survy, 2° Survy which whatever reasons may justify it.

In the Royal Order of Scotland, the first 3 Officers are designated respectively, in the exercise of their functions, by the names *Wisdom, Strength, Beauty*.

For what you are pointing out to me about the grade of Compö it is possible that the number of tools was originally 5 because of the preponderance given to this number in the grade, and moreover you know that there are many variants in this Ritual; but yet there is no necessary connection between many of the tools and that of the journeys, since the latter of these must be done hands-free. In the Ritual of Gloton, the tools are indicated as follows: 1° mallet and chisel; 2° square and compass; 3° ruler and lever; Plantagenet also indicates the same order, while pointing out that it is not always respected; he also points out that, in the Germanic countries, the journeys are made without tools and by forming the chain of union, and that, in Switzerland and Austria, their number is even generally reduced to 3, which is obviously quite incorrect...

Yours sincerely.

R.Guenon

Cairo, September 27, 1949

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I received your two letters of September 17 and 19 (with 6 coupons in each).

I see that on the whole there have been no unfortunate incidents at the Convent, as we had feared, on the subject of the rituals and I am naturally happy about that; but on the other hand, the result is not even very brilliant, since it is a matter of purely and simply maintaining the rituals previously in use, which surely are hardly satisfactory from the traditional point of view; I wonder if these rituals are now going to be made mandatory... Despite the flaws of the Marty project, it's a little surprising that it didn't get more attention from LLÿ, especially after the success the report had de Marty at the Convent last year; I suppose what Cerf had said some time ago must have been based on the elements he already had at that time for the preparation of his report. As for the wish concerning the overhaul of the 2nd degree ritual, it is quite certain that this one indeed needs it even more than the others; but it seems to me a little difficult to take it in isolation in this way, without doing anything to "harmonize" the set of three rituals, because, whatever one may say, there is no doubt that these must be considered as constituting a whole.

The unpleasant impression you felt was probably due to the "atmosphere" produced by bringing together people whose ideas and tendencies are surely discordant in many respects; if there is nothing similar in ordinary times, there is probably not much reason to worry about it...

When you see Cerf, you will be very kind to convey to him my congratulations on his election to the CÿFÿ; but did he not take over the office of Gÿ Oratÿ or even any other? I suppose indeed, for the Gÿ Offÿ, there are no other important changes than those which you indicate to me.

I am glad to know that Mordvinoff received my letter; for what he told you about the eventual succession of Cerf, it is not only I who agree with him, but with the Fÿ Oratÿ adjÿ, who for several reasons does not want to hear of taking charge of it himself, which naturally changes the aspect of the question; as, moreover, it goes without saying that you could always count on his help and come to an agreement with him for everything, I really don't see what one could object to under these conditions.

Yours sincerely.

.....

Mr René GUENON;

Mrs Edmond LOURY

Mr and Mrs Emile CLISSON, Mrs Emile BELILE, Mr and Mrs  
Alfred MASSE, Mr and Mrs Henri Loury, Mr and Mrs Armand Loury,  
Mr. and Mrs. René Loury;

Mrs DURU, Mrs BERGER;

Mrs Henri PERROCHON, Mrs Emile de LASAULAIE;

Messrs. Henri and Pierre CLISSON, Misses Simone and Bernadette CLISSON,  
Mr. Jean Belile, Misses Françoise and Madeleine BELILE, Messrs. René and Henri LOURY;

Miss Madeleine Berger, Mr Pierre Berger, Mrs Gasnault.

Mrs. Tourlet, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Perrochon and their children, Mr. and Mrs. Muray and their  
children, Mr. Louis de LASAULAIE, Mr. and Mrs.  
Maurice de LASAULAIE and their daughter

Mrs BOUCAULT and her son, Mrs DION and her daughter, Mrs Henri TOURLET and her  
daughter, the Doctor and Mrs René TOURLET and their children, Miss Jeanne  
ROUSSEAU;

Mrs LAURENT, Mr and Mrs René THOREAU and their children, Mr and  
Mrs GROLLEAU and their children, Mr and Mrs Marcel THOREAU and their children, Miss  
Jeanne LIBAUD;

The GROSSET, PALLU, Boucher, Melin, HARMONIERE and BILETTE families

Have the pain to inform you of the cruel loss they have just experienced in the person of  
Madame  
René GUENON born  
Berthe LOURY their  
wife, daughter, sister, sister-in-law, niece, grand-niece, aunt, first cousin, cousin and little  
cousin,  
deceased, armed with the sacraments of the Church, in Paris, on January 15, 1928, in her 45th year

Pray to God for her!

51 rue Saint-Louis en l'Île,  
Paris 4°

Champigny-sur-Vendée  
(Indre and Loire)